

Chapter 6

ASCC Moving Forward Post-2015: Summary and Key Recommendations

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Chapter 6

ASCC Moving Forward Post-2015: Summary and Key Recommendations

I. It's High Time, It's ASCC Time!

Arguably, the first major and enduring achievement of ASEAN is on the political-security front; that is, the attainment of peace and stability in the region for most of the last quarter century, possibly the only region in the developing world with such a remarkable record on peace and stability. ASEAN was born in the late 1960s after a period of substantial disputes and tensions amongst the original ASEAN members, perhaps best exemplified by the Indonesia–Malaysia *konfrontasi*. To a large extent, ASEAN, in its early years was a mechanism to prevent war and manage inter-state conflicts as initially tested by the Philippines–Malaysia dispute over Sabah. Over the years, ASEAN has succeeded in facilitating the road to conflict resolution within the region, best exemplified by its successful steering of the peace process for Cambodia in 1991 and the eventual inclusion of the countries in conflict – Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam – into ASEAN. The result has heightened ASEAN's international credibility and helped ASEAN become an effective platform on security-related matters in the East Asian region under the ASEAN Regional Forum, even if it is being tested again in the current tensions in the South China Sea.

Arguably, the second major and enduring achievement of ASEAN is on the economic front. Although there were regional economic cooperation initiatives since the early years of ASEAN, the process of regional economic integration started in the 1970s and 1980s with the preferential tariff arrangement and the industrial complementation programmes. Regional economic integration in ASEAN started in earnest with the signing of the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement in the early 1990s, culminating in the current efforts towards the realisation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). The ERIA mid-term review of the implementation of the AEC Blueprint shows significant progress, although challenges remain. The year 2015 is a major

milestone in ASEAN's regional economic integration process because the ASEAN Summit in November 2015 is expected to announce the launching of the AEC. Even if 2015 is but a major milestone in the region's journey towards a truly fully integrated regional economy in the future, it is worth emphasising that nowhere in the world has a group of countries with extremely wide levels of development and economic and population size worked together over a wide range of areas in a deliberate path towards a fully functioning economic community, as in the case of ASEAN. Given that the AEC Blueprint regional integration measures are supportive of, and their implementation undertaken in conjunction with, national economic governance reforms (especially in the facilitation and liberalisation arenas) in the ASEAN member states, the market response has been positive: ASEAN is now a global investment hotspot, overtaking China in terms of total foreign direct investment (Intal, 2015), and where the regional ASEAN market is an increasingly important factor in the firms' decisions to invest or expand operations in the region.

Arguably, just as peace and stability provided the solid foundation for regional economic integration initiatives and that regional economic integration makes it more imperative to maintain peace and stability in the region, there cannot be lasting economic integration unless it benefits virtually all people in the region. There cannot be lasting peace and stability without the ASEAN peoples' deep sense of their commonality and belongingness and shared ASEAN identity and destiny, people-to-people connectivity, and engagement in the regional integration and community building process. In short, there cannot be a true ASEAN Community without a robust ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC).

The drive towards an ASCC did not go in earnest as early as in the political-security and economic arenas. Nonetheless, a browse of the ASCC Blueprint measures brings out the remarkable variety and quantity of ASCC initiatives and activities, reflecting the energy, enthusiasm, and goodwill (including those of ASEAN's dialogue partners) in building a socio-cultural community in the region. Although many of the initiatives and activities are one-off, confidence building or capacity building affairs, they are a good foundation of what the ASCC is built on.

The challenge for the ASCC Blueprint is to be **transformative**; that is, it should drive the region to be more inclusive, resilient, environmentally friendly, and green, as well as open and appreciative of its diversity and unity, and where the regional and national institutions are more engaged with the people. This means that the blueprint would go to the next level beyond

confidence building and capacity building efforts and towards more concerted regional and national efforts for a greater collective response to current and emerging trends and threats, a greater focus on the environmental dimensions of the regional integration process and investing in people and institutions to facilitate better outcomes from development and regional integration. The ASCC would become the bedrock of a people-centred and people-oriented ASEAN that is inclusive and resilient, economically integrated, and dynamic, and is a haven of peace and stability in the world. The success of the AEC and the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) draws in part on the success of the ASCC.

Thus, it is high time to invest more time and effort towards a robust ASCC. To this end, this chapter summarises the key highlights and recommendations in the previous chapters and the background papers that were prepared under the Framing the ASCC Post-2015 project.

II. Vision and Indicative Outcomes

The 1997 ASEAN 2020 and the Nay Pyi Taw Declaration on the Community's Post-2015 Vision signed by the ASEAN Leaders in Kuala Lumpur in 1997 and in Nay Pyi Taw in 2014, respectively, have clearly expressed their vision of the ASCC. The ASEAN Vision 2020 sees an ASEAN Community:

...conscious of its ties of history, aware of its cultural heritage and bound by a common regional identity...a socially cohesive and caring ASEAN where hunger, malnutrition, deprivation and poverty are no longer basic problems...where the civil society is empowered...a clean and green ASEAN with fully established mechanism for sustainable development to ensure the protection of the region's environment, the sustainability of its natural resources, and the high quality of life of its peoples...

The Nay Pyi Taw Declaration puts succinctly the central elements of the ASCC post-2015 as follows:

An ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community that is inclusive, resilient, dynamic and engages and benefits the people.

It is apparent that such vision remains an enduring challenge for the region post-2015. As discussed in Chapter 1, despite the remarkable success of most ASEAN member states in reducing dire poverty over the past two-

and-a-half decades, a large number of poor and marginally non-poor still remain. Hunger is still a problem in a few member states. Millions of children in the region do not have full primary education, which is becoming more of a handicap in view of the increasingly knowledge- and skills-dependent world we live in. Social protection is still a challenge for most member states. Given the above, it can be surmised that a significant portion of the ASEAN populace is vulnerable to sliding into deeper poverty or into poverty from adverse economic shocks like substantial food price hikes or from natural disasters. Indeed, ASEAN is prone to natural disasters and is very vulnerable to the adverse effects of global climate change.

In addition, pollution and resource degradation are increasingly serious in many parts of ASEAN. Hence, resiliency and the drive for green growth and sustainable development are important for ASEAN. All of the above are concerns against the backdrop of the need for many member states to improve their economic competitiveness through substantial improvement in their productivity growth, especially relative to important reference countries like China, which has registered a significantly higher rate of productivity growth than a number of ASEAN member states over the past two decades. This brings put the importance of investing in human capital as much as in physical infrastructure, bringing out the issue of the quality of education and efficacy of institutions. Finally, as the region deepens its economic integration, there is heightened salience to the challenge of turning ASEAN from a primarily 'institutional identity' (as reflected, for example, by the more than one thousand ASEAN-related meetings in a year) into a 'communal identity', that is, an ASEAN that is deeply felt and owned by the people.

The proposed framework discussed in the next section aims to address the concerns raised above and to accelerate the attainment of an inclusive, resilient, dynamic, sustainable ASEAN that engages and benefits the people in the region.

Indicative outcomes. Animating such vision as embodied in the ASEAN Vision 2020 and the Nay Pyi Taw Declaration entails '... clear and measurable ASEAN Development Goals ...' and the concomitant indicative outcomes and targets, which shape, and at the same time become the ultimate reference point for, the strategies and actions that are meant to drive, facilitate, support, and push the achievement of the goals and targets.

It is worth highlighting the importance of indicative outcomes and/or targets. This is best expressed by the report, *Realizing the Future We Want*

for All, on its evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as thus:

The format of the MDG framework brought an inspirational vision together with a set of concrete and time-bound goals and targets that could be monitored by statistically robust indicators. This has not only helped keep the focus on results, but also motivated the strengthening of statistical systems and use of quality data to improve policy design and monitoring by national governments and international organizations (UN, 2012, p.6).

Not surprisingly, the United Nations (UN) Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda retained this format of concrete goals, targets, and indicators – one of the major strengths of the MDG framework – in order to have ‘... a clear framework of accountability, based on clear and easy to communicate goals, operational time bound quantitative targets and measurable indicators’ (UN, 2012, p.8).

Table 6.1 presents the proposed indicators and targets related to the vision of an inclusive ASEAN. Most indicators in Table 6.1 are the same as the MDG or Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators, considering that ASEAN considers the MDGs as mirroring the region’s commitment to building a caring and sharing ASEAN Community. There are additional indicators to the MDG and/or SDG indicators that give greater depth to and insight of the goal of an inclusive ASEAN. The inclusiveness indicators are on absolute poverty, inequality, education, health, remunerable employment, social protection, and social development–enhancing infrastructure. The proposed outcome indicators of a resilient and sustainable ASEAN are on food security, energy security, disaster preparedness and resiliency, and sustainability. There is one proposed indicator on ASEAN awareness, affinity, and participation.

Table 6.1. Proposed ASCC Post-2015 Indicative Outcomes/Targets

Area	Indicative Outcomes/Targets
Inclusive and Caring ASEAN	
Poverty and Hunger	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reduce the 2015 value by two-thirds, if not totally eliminate, extreme poverty, defined in terms of \$1.25 at 2005 PPP per capita per day by 2025, and completely eliminate it by 2030. b. Reduce the 2015 value of extreme poverty, defined as \$1.51 at 2005 PPP per capita per day by one-half by 2025, and by two-thirds by 2030. c. Reduce the 2015 value of the national poverty incidence, defined based on national poverty line, by one-half by 2025, and by two-thirds by 2030. d. Reduce the 2015 value of indicators of hunger by one-half by 2025, and by two-thirds by 2030. e. Reduce the 2015/2016 value of multidimensional poverty by one-third by 2015 and by one-half by 2030.
Inequality	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Average per capita GDP growth in CLMV countries higher than the average per capita GDP growth of ASEAN-6 countries during 2016–2025 b. Gini ratio of less than 0.40 (or 40 out of 100) by 2025 c. Income (consumption) growth of the bottom 40 percent (or the bottom 25 percent) higher than the national average during 2016–2025
Human Capital and Social Protection	
Net enrolment rate in primary and secondary education	100 percent net enrolment ratio in primary education
	85 percent minimum net enrolment ratio in secondary education, male and female
Survival rate in primary education	100 percent survival rate in primary education by 2025
Youth literacy rate, male and female	100 percent youth literacy rate, male and female, by 2025

Percentage of stunted and wasting children below 5 years of age	Reduce by one-third the percentage of stunted and wasting children below 5 years of age.
Mortality rate of children below 5 years of age	Reduce by one-half the mortality rate of children below 5 years of age for Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao PDR, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam; reduce to or maintain at 10 per thousand live births or less for Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, and Singapore.
Immunisation rate against measles and DPT3 for 1-year olds	100 percent immunisation rate against measles and DPT3
Maternal mortality rate	Reduce the maternal mortality rate by two-thirds in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao PDR, and Myanmar; by one-half in Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam; and maintain at 15–28 per 100,000 live births for Brunei Darussalam, and at less than 10 per 100,000 live births for Singapore.
Percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel	Births attended by skilled health personnel should be no less than 90 percent of live births.
Incidence of malaria and tuberculosis	Reduce by one-half the incidence of malaria and tuberculosis per 100,000 population.
Social Protection Adequacy Index	Develop social protection adequacy index, and then set some target improvement for 2025.
Remunerable Employment and Social Development	
Open unemployment rate at the lowest possible approximation of full employment	An unemployment rate of around 3 percent or less can be considered full employment.
Percentage to total employment of working poor at \$1.25 per day in 2005 PPP	Reduce by three-fourths by 2025 the percentage share of working poor to total employment.

Share of own-account workers and contributing family members to total employment	Reduce by one-fifth the share of own-account workers and contributing family members to total employment.
Incidence of child labour	Reduce by three-quarters, or eliminate altogether, incidence of child labour.
Access to improved water sources	Universal access (i.e. 100 percent coverage) to improved water sources
Access to improved sanitation	Reduce by one-half the deficit in the access to improved sanitation.
Access to electricity	Reduce by one-half the deficit in the access to electricity.
Access to information and communication technology	For Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, and Singapore, reduce by one-half the deficit in the universal access to the Internet. For the rest of the member states, at least double the percentage of population who are Internet users.
Resilient and Sustainable ASEAN	
Food Security Index (FSI) /Rice Bowl Index (RBI)	Each member state to voluntarily offer indicators and targets for 2025 in those components of the food security index that are of special interest to them and to the ASEAN Community
Energy Security Index	ASEAN to develop an ASEAN Energy Security and/or Resiliency Index, based on the factors used in the ERIA index, and agree on some quantitative target as reference point for regional and national discussions and programmes of action
ASEAN Disaster Preparedness and Resiliency Index	ASEAN to develop and use an ASEAN Preparedness and Resiliency Index. ASEAN could use the agreements at Sendai as starting point for its indicative outcomes on disaster preparedness and resiliency for 2025.
ASEAN Environmental Performance Index (EPI)	ASEAN to develop an Environmental Performance Index (EPI). A modest rise (e.g. 10 percent) in the modified environmental vitality, air quality, and ASEAN EPI by 2025 may be warranted. What would be equally important is for member states to agree on a minimum score for the component variables of the indices by 2025; i.e. no zero score on any of the component variables by any member state.

Deep Sense of Shared ASEAN Identity and Destiny	
ASEAN Awareness, Affinity, and Participation Index	ASEAN to develop an ASEAN Awareness, Affinity, and Participation Index. The index is a weighted average of scores on awareness (of ASEAN and its initiatives as well as ASEAN countries), affinity (appreciation of historical and cultural linkages and of common regional concerns), and participation (in ASEAN processes and initiatives as well as of intra-ASEAN people-to-people activities).

CLMV = Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam; DPT3 = diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus shots until the third dose; PPP = purchasing power parity.

Source: Prepared by authors from Chapter 2.

Chapter 2 discusses the indicators and rationale for the proposed targets for the indicators. Some of the indicators are yet to be put into operation, for example, the ASEAN Preparedness and Resiliency Index, the ASEAN Awareness, Affinity, and Participation Index, and the Social Protection Adequacy Index. These proposed indicators reflect the view that clear targets and indicators help push the implementation and evaluation of the initiatives that are meant to support the attainment of the concerned goals and targets. It is noted that more indicators could be considered; for example, the number of labour strikes as an indicator of industrial peace. Nonetheless, it is preferable to have a more parsimonious list of indicators to have a more analytic, policy, and monitoring focus on the more important targets and indicators.

The proposed indicators and targets in **Table 6.1** express the goals embodied in the 1997 Vision 2020 and the Nay Pyi Taw Declaration on the ASEAN Community's Vision Post-2015. They are also important reference points against which the implementation of the strategies, policies, and programmes under the proposed framework of moving the ASCC forward post-2015 can be monitored and evaluated. The proposed framework and the strategies and proposed policies and/or programmes are discussed in the next section.

III. Proposed Framework, Strategies, and Recommendations

The proposed framework, as discussed in Chapter 2 and replicated below, follows the familiar 'pillars' approach to building a 'house': here, referring to

the ASCC. Drawing from the 1997 ASEAN Vision 2020 and the Nay Pyi Taw Declaration, four pillars (and characteristics) stand out as the key to building the ASCC, namely:

- Engendering an inclusive and caring ASEAN Community
- Engendering resiliency and sustainable development in ASEAN
- Engendering a deep sense of commonality and belongingness and shared ASEAN identity and destiny
- Engendering a dynamic and global ASEAN society

The four pillars (and characteristics) have the foundation of a people-centred and people-oriented challenge and perspective.

Framework of Framing the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Post-2015



Source: Prepared by authors (replicated from Chapter 2, Figure 2.1)

The proposed framework does **not** attempt to be exhaustive; other pillars (and characteristics) may be warranted to comprehensively address the critical elements of the ASCC listed above. Indeed, the proposed framework does not address the element on the ability to continuously innovate and be a proactive member of the global community, or what can be called the characteristic of a *dynamic and global ASEAN society*. This last element is

addressed in the ERIA publication, *ASEAN Rising: ASEAN and AEC Beyond 2015*.

IV. Engendering an Inclusive and Caring ASEAN Community

This report asserts that an inclusive and caring ASEAN Community could be achieved through engendering inclusive growth, investing in (especially basic) education and healthcare, strengthening assistance for and protection of the vulnerable population, and strengthening the monitoring and analysis of poverty and vulnerability including the impact and effectiveness of policies and programmes for the poor and the vulnerable. Policies for achieving inclusive growth are necessarily context specific; nonetheless, this report highlights the importance of growth in agricultural productivity and production, connectivity between peripheral areas to the urban centres, remunerative employment, and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) development. The provision of basic education and health care is an important foundation of social mobility and human capital development. Social assistance and protection, particularly in the form of social insurance for the vulnerable, as well as an improved regulatory regime for migrant workers, could protect the bottom 40 percent of the population who are more vulnerable to economic and natural disaster shocks than other groups.

Inclusive growth is economic growth marked with a reduction in poverty and the expansion of the middle class. Economic growth that is not widely shared with the bottom 40 percent of the population will endanger social stability, thus undermining the well-being of society. This report emphasises the following key strategies:

- **Agricultural and rural development.** This is important for some ASEAN member states where the agricultural sector remains a major economic sector, and the rural poverty rate remains considerable relative to the urban areas. Sustained agricultural development rests on robust agricultural productivity growth. Investing in agricultural research and development (R&D), rural education, electricity, irrigation, and good incentives are the key factors for rural poverty reduction as the experiences of countries such as China, India, and Viet Nam show.

In addition, **Table 6.2** presents other recommendations on trade promotion, development of value chains, soft and hard infrastructure, training, and targeted social safety nets, drawn from Vo and Nguyen (2015).

Most of the above-mentioned recommendations are the province of the AEC bodies, reflecting the strong economic dimension of inclusive growth. Nonetheless, the recommendations on targeted social assistance and training of farmers for greater employability bring out the complementary roles of initiatives under the ASCC. The current ASCC Blueprint under the social welfare and protection characteristic also includes the facilitation of a rural volunteers' movement and the exchange of young professionals in rural development in ASEAN, a potentially potent measure towards robust rural development and industrialisation in the region. **Table 6.2** shows the summary of recommendations on agricultural and rural development for inclusive growth from the project background papers and the ASCC Blueprint.

**Table 6.2. Summary of Key Recommendations on Inclusive Growth:
Agricultural and Rural Development**

From Project and Background Papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in agricultural research and development (R&D), rural education, rural infrastructure (roads, electricity, irrigation, etc.); improve the regulatory and facilitation regime in agriculture as well as provide good incentives structure (e.g. limited market/price intervention, reduction in fertilizer relative price). • Promote trade in agriculture, forestry, and fishery products; develop rural value chains and rural industrialisation through investment in hard infrastructure (e.g. roads) and soft infrastructure (e.g. rural transport logistics, information) and strengthened rural–urban links; promote training for farmers to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensify efforts to implement projects in Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI), especially on the second IAI Work Plan, and other subregional cooperation frameworks; provide support systems for family living under poverty; strengthen ASEAN cooperation in microfinance; establish ASEAN data bank on poverty incidence and poverty reduction programme; facilitate rural volunteer movement and the exchange of young professionals in ASEAN rural development. • Undertake assessment studies on the social impact of regional integration; adopt and implement regional advocacy programmes, such

From Project and Background Papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
improve employability and reduce underemployment; provide social safety nets targeted at poor rural households, as well as the continuation of the sharing of experiences and best practices amongst member states and with ASEAN dialogue partners (Vo and Nguyen, 2015).	as on agriculture, marine and fisheries, agro-based industry, and integrated rural development.

Sources: Vo and Nguyen (2015), ASEAN (2009b).

- Expansion of remunerative employment.** In addition to raising the incomes of farmers and fisherfolk, the other most potent way of poverty reduction and growth of the middle class is the expansion of remunerative employment simply because labour and human skills are the most important assets of most of the poor. Thus, employment-biased economic growth for the member states – where there remains significant open unemployment and underemployment as well as the working poor in order to move the economies towards full employment and rise in average wages over time – is important. Also, a good industrial relations environment, investing in workers, and linking wage growth to productivity growth are important. This results in an industrial labour force that is increasingly skilled consistent with the industrial upgrading of member states.

Ofreneo and Abyoto (2015) emphasise the importance of social dialogue amongst the workers, firms, and government that supports a sound industrial relations system. The ASCC Blueprint also emphasises the incorporation of decent work principles in the work culture, safety, and health at the workplace. Skilling up of workers is a critical element of a decent work culture. Lim (2015) provides examples of mechanisms and institutions that support worker skilling up, while the ASCC Blueprint highlights the establishment of national skills frameworks and the eventual ASEAN skills recognition framework. This reflects the perspective that the workplace and firms are also learning centres; as such, facilitating the mobility of workers across ASEAN using the ASEAN skills recognition framework is also a ‘learning tool’ for worker upgrading as much as an efficiency enhancing measure from a regional perspective. All the above may call for what Lim proposes of changing trade unions’ basic objective from employment security to employability and

from a confrontational approach to a collaborative approach, as well as what the ASCC Blueprint highlights, which is the enhanced capacity of governments to monitor labour markets and human resource indicators. At the regional level, the ASCC Blueprint also focuses on the region-wide implementation of a regional plan of action on occupational safety and the establishment of a regional network of industrial relations experts. **Table 6.3** provides a summary of the key recommendations and actions on the employment and industrial relations front that ultimately engender the expansion of remunerative employment and the virtual elimination of child labour and the working poor.

Table 6.3. Summary of Key Recommendations on Employment and Industrial Relations

From Project and Background Papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement employment-biased economic growth policies; improve social dialogue process amongst workers, firms, and government as well as implement good industrial relations practice; and link wages with productivity as well as encourage firms to invest in workers and good work conditions. • Manage industrial relations through (a) sustaining and deepening social dialogue amongst the workers, firms, and government that support sound industrial relations system; and (b) strengthening laws for the core labour rights and collaborate to upgrade the labour inspection capacity (Ofreneo and Abyoto, 2015). • Invest in workers and promote firms as learning centres through (a) setting up the Continuing Education and Training (CET) Master Plan; (b) developing and improving quality of vocational training systems; (c) changing trade unions’ basic objective from employment security to employability and from a confrontational approach to a collaboration approach; (d) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance capacity of governments to monitor labour markets and human resource indicators; establish national skills frameworks and the eventual ASEAN skills recognition framework; implement a regional plan of action on occupational safety and establish a regional network of industrial relations experts. • Encourage the adoption and implementation of international standards on corporate social responsibility (CSR); promote sustainable relations between commercial activities and its communities through community based development activities. • Enhance the information technology skills of the workforce; develop a regional cooperation plan on skills development for women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

From Project and Background Papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
government committing resources for workers' learning; and (e) promoting SMEs as learning and training centres (Lim, 2015).	

Sources: Ofreneo and Abyoto (2015), Lim (2015), ASEAN (2009b).

- Development of micro, small, and medium enterprises.** Most of the jobs created in the non-agricultural sector are with the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Thus, the expansion of remunerative employment involves the development of MSMEs. Interestingly, as women often head microenterprises, MSME development contributes to the empowerment of women also. Given the wide variety of MSMEs, the best way to support their development is apparently in improving the policy and regulatory environment facing them. The ASEAN SME Policy Index, developed by ERIA and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in conjunction with the ASEAN SME Working Group, brings out the following key factors to improve the policy regime for SMEs: (1) improve SME access to credit, (2) ensure easy start-up and business-friendly regulatory environment, (3) improve SMEs' access to support services, (4) enhance the technological upgrading and innovative capacity of SMEs, and (5) promote entrepreneurial education (ERIA, 2014a). Although the SME Policy Index did not include microenterprises, virtually all the above recommendations are apparently supportive of the development of microenterprises. Nonetheless, micro-entrepreneurs would likely need support in entrepreneurship and managerial skills. The ASCC Blueprint 2019–2015 includes supportive measures to strengthening entrepreneurship skills of women, experts, and young people. Arguably, strengthening the managerial skills of micro-entrepreneurs can be an important initiative under corporate social responsibility (CSR) as well as business organisations, possibly with the cooperation of colleges and universities with business-related courses as is done in some cases in the Philippines, and which can be a region-wide initiative as a complement to or part of the ASEAN network of entrepreneurship experts (**Table 6.4**).

Table 6.4. Summary of Key Recommendations on Development of MSMEs

From Project and Background papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the policy and regulatory environment facing the MSMEs. • Improve MSMEs access to credit; ensure easy start-up and business-friendly regulatory environment; improve MSMEs' access to support services; enhance MSMEs' technological upgrading and innovative capacity; and promote entrepreneurial education. • Strengthen the managerial skills of micro-entrepreneurs through corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities and cooperation with universities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a network of women entrepreneurship, a network of entrepreneurship experts, and the ASEAN Forum on youth entrepreneurship.

Sources: ERIA (2014a), ASEAN (2009b).

- **Enhanced connectivity of peripheries to growth centres.** This is implied to a large extent by some of the recommendations on agricultural and rural development earlier, primarily through improved transport and communication infrastructure and logistics services. This also has a significant distributional implications. Given that many regional initiatives on trade and transport facilitation focus on major economic centres, largely the capital regions, within ASEAN, there is a danger that the domestic producers in the hinterlands would lose out to competitor imports from other member states in the major domestic consumer market, which is usually in the major economic centres and capitals. For archipelagic member states, efficiency and cost competitiveness of domestic shipping are also important, considering a comparatively higher cost of domestic shipping than international shipping on a per-distance basis in the two archipelagic member countries (Indonesia and the Philippines). This suggests the importance of engendering greater competition in the domestic transport and logistics industry, which for domestic shipping would imply easing cabotage regulations. The limitation of physical infrastructure is one major investment drawback in a number of member states, hence, the issue of improving the regulatory regime and institutional capability for public–private partnership becomes salient. The initiatives of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, especially on public–private partnership, and the AEC Blueprint measure on services liberalisation capture many of the key policy imperatives to enhance the connectivity of the

peripheries to the growth centres. Indeed for the master plan, there is a greater focus on connectivity of ‘peripheral countries’ with the ‘growth centres’ in the region, primarily through the enhancement of physical links along certain regional economic corridors and through more efficient trade and transport facilitation.

- **Investing in education and health.** *Being prerequisites of human development, education and health are a critical pathway for achieving inclusive growth. Investing in education entails investing in quality basic education, higher education, and adult life-long learning. Investing in quality basic education possesses the characteristic of investing in public goods. Its benefit goes beyond individual economic gains, but also social cohesion, cultural appreciation, and civic consciousness. If education for all is to provide opportunities for the poor, universal access to basic health is meant to minimise the possibility that ill health, especially prolonged and/or debilitating, could lead households and especially the near-poor towards a downwards spiral into poverty or deeper into poverty arising from such health shocks. There are a number of dimensions in which ill health interact with other components of poverty; that is, poor nutrition, poor shelter, poor working conditions, healthcare costs, erosive livelihood campaigns, and coping strategies that sacrifice long-term investments (for example, livestock, orchard) in favour of the urgent and present. Indeed, the poor are the least who can afford health shocks and debilitating ill health (Grant, 2005). Poverty-inducing health shocks can arise from the spread of communicable diseases and from events such as maternal or paternal death in a poor family. Thus, the ASCC Blueprint considers that one of the strategic objectives of enhanced social welfare and protection in ASEAN is to ensure access to adequate and affordable healthcare, medical services, and medicine, as well promote healthy lifestyles for all the peoples in ASEAN.*

- **Education.** To ensure basic education for all, the report’s key recommendations, especially for ASEAN member states without 100 percent net enrolment and/or with considerable school dropout rates (**Table 6.5**), centre on (1) ‘reaching the unreached’ (2) raising survival rates in basic education especially primary education, (3) improving the quality of schools and teachers, and (4) increasing the funding for education per student. Regional cooperation through the sharing of best practices, experiences, and capacity building is also important. The ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015 emphasises the promotion of equal access to education for women and girls and the exchange of best practices on gender-sensitive school curriculum. Considering the role of schools in the moulding the character of students, the

ASCC Blueprint also emphasises initiatives that strengthen awareness and understanding of other cultures and peoples, which contributes towards a deep sense of an ASEAN identity.

Table 6.5. Summary of Key Recommendations on Education

From Project and Background Papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the access to and quality of basic education by (a) ‘reaching the unreached’ through approaches such as building infrastructure to allow students easier access to schools, distance learning, and mobile teachers; (b) raising survival rates in basic education (especially primary education) through approaches such as conditional transfers, scholarships, supplementary and school feeding; (c) improving the quality of schools and teachers through approaches such as teacher training and teacher exchange within the region; and (d) increasing the funding for education per student. Regional cooperation through the sharing of best practices, experiences, and capacity building is also important. • Invest in quality basic education through (a) public–private mix in financing and operation, (b) using technology to provide distance learning, and (c) improving education inputs (Tullao, et al., 2015). • Improve higher education in ASEAN to equip students to be competitive on a global scale through academic foundation, community service, regional placement, and incubation programmes. Universities could also implement ‘excellence initiatives’ to improve competitiveness and promote inclusiveness (Sakamoto, 2015). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance and prioritise education through (a) promoting equal access to education for women and girls and the exchange of best practices on a gender-sensitive school curriculum; (b) developing technical assistance programmes, e.g., on training for teachers and staff exchange programmes; (c) promoting the use of open, distance education, and e-learning; (d) creating research clusters amongst ASEAN higher education institutions; (e) strengthening collaboration with regional and international educational organisations; (f) promoting ‘a semester abroad’ or ‘a year abroad’ programme; (g) establishing an ASEAN Youth Development Index; and (h) promoting early child care development through sharing of best practices and capacity building. • Promote the use of information and communication technology (ICT) at all levels of education; increase the ICT literacy of women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. • Establish a network of science and technology centres of excellence, strengthen collaborative research including through exchange of scientists and researchers, establish strategic alliances with the private sector on R&D.

Sources: Tullao, et al. (2015), Sakamoto (2015), ASEAN (2009b).

Basic education provides the fundamental basis for people to escape poverty; however, it is higher education and R&D that expand people's knowledge and skills as well as facilitating industrial upgrading, innovation, and improving the competitiveness of the economy. For ASEAN, the future of higher education should be the one that is affordable and considered to be high value to its students, connected to employment opportunities, and provide opportunities to study and/or work within the ASEAN Community. Higher education in ASEAN should move beyond the traditional education curriculum whereby the learning process is characterised by classroom learning and lack of community interaction, to one that will equip students to be competitive globally through the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills and innovation. Higher education in ASEAN should also foster the spirit of unity in diversity amongst students and strengthen collaboration amongst the universities in the region.

The report presents an innovative approach to ASEAN higher education that addresses the concerns indicated above. The proposed model of higher education for ASEAN is as follows (Sakamoto, 2015):

- Academic foundation, that is, collaboration of universities in the region to provide a core section of first-year courses offered in English;
- Community service, that is, inclusion of community service as part of the curriculum so that students can listen to the needs of society and do research in campus to address these needs;
- Regional placement, that is, providing opportunities to students to study in regional universities so that the student will have greater appreciation of the region; and
- Incubation, that is, facilitating students' final year projects in the form of incubation programmes to foster students' entrepreneurial spirit and to provide start-up resources. These initiatives could be started amongst the ASEAN University Network universities and then spread to other universities through cascade approach.

'Excellence initiatives' provide the approach that marries the drive for global excellence on the one hand and for inclusiveness on the other hand. Under excellence initiatives, participating universities present strategic plans to raise quality and reach higher status internationally; all students from participating universities, regardless of socio-economic status (especially the poor), are given opportunities to become involved under the model described above; and the participating universities collaborate together with students in the ASEAN Flagship study and research programmes (biofuels,

functional food, climate change, amongst others) and/or jointly with non-ASEAN universities leading to North–South–South capacity building (Sakamoto, 2015). It is apparent that government financial support is needed to undertake the excellence initiatives in ASEAN, as was done in other largely developed countries (for example, Japan, Germany, France, and China). This proposed model also supports the ASCC characteristic on a dynamic and global ASEAN society.

- **Health.** As indicated earlier, access to healthcare and promotion of healthy lifestyles is an important element for social welfare and protection under the ASCC Blueprint. Underpinning the emphasis on health in the ASCC is that, despite considerable improvements in the health related MDGs, there remain significant challenges in a number of ASEAN member states in child and maternal mortality, percentage of stunted children, incidence of malaria and prevalence of tuberculosis. The problem of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is becoming serious in a number of member states. Injuries, especially from road accidents, are likely to worsen with the increased motorisation in ASEAN. Finally, there are increasing pressures on ASEAN's health status because its demographic transition is amongst the fastest in the world and as such the region has to address the issues of ageing. In addition, ASEAN is the most vulnerable region to natural disasters that will eventually have an impact on health.

ASEAN is aware of the importance of addressing the various health concerns in the region. Indeed, the ASCC Blueprint activities are many and wide ranging, which is commendable on the one hand because it reflects the enthusiasm of various stakeholders in and out of the region to work together to help address health concerns. However, on the other hand, the health initiatives are arguably too wide in scope and unwieldy for all of them to be implemented and monitored; hence the need for greater focus. The report proposes that for post-2015, the top priorities are basic healthcare and the (gradual) implementation of universal health care (UHC). UHC is important because it grants basic health care for all. The problem is that some ASEAN member states lack a supply of health facilities and/or infrastructure and personnel, which can only be addressed over time and with considerable resources. Thus, UHC would need to be implemented gradually, taking into consideration the increasing supply of health facilities and personnel and the member states' corresponding fiscal capacity. Other policies and strategies to address the inadequacy of supply include the provision of incentives for medical personnel to serve in remote areas, collaboration amongst medical

training institutions in the region through transfer of credits and student and faculty transfer, and easing labour restrictions to the movement of health professionals and investment restrictions to foreign investments in health facilities and services, albeit perhaps with some (but not severely restrictive) conditions. The implementation of UHC has implications on the issue of healthcare for migrants given the large number of migrant labour in ASEAN from other member states.

The prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases round out the top five priorities on a descending ranking. The prevention and control of communicable diseases must necessarily have a substantial regional cooperation and coordination dimension. And indeed, the ASCC Blueprint has many important initiatives that are meant to enhance regional preparedness and capacity through integrated approaches to prevention, surveillance, and timely response to communicable and emerging infectious diseases. There is less cohesiveness in the activities for the prevention and control of NCDs because the diseases are much more varied (for example, cancer, diabetes, and accidents) and their prevention involves more efforts outside the health sector (for example, transport sector in road accidents) as well as significant lifestyle changes (for example, reduction if not elimination of tobacco and alcohol use).

In addition to the above prioritisation and the corresponding actions (**Table 6.6**), Picazo (2015) recommends incorporating some elements that are under-emphasised in the ASEAN post-2015 health vision: (1) governance and stewardship issues of healthcare public assets and social programme funds; (2) health regulation, especially on health technology assessment; (3) capital investment approaches to build hospitals and clinics; (4) persistent geographic inequity of health outcomes, particularly of indigenous peoples; and (5) the impact of climate change on health. It is best to look at them as comprising the sixth ranked priority for the health sector post-2015.

Table 6.6. Summary of Key Recommendations on Health

From Project and Background Papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For post-2015, the top priorities for ASEAN member states' health agenda are (a) basic healthcare; (b) (gradual) implementation of universal health care (UHC); (c) provision of incentives for medical personnel to serve in remote areas, collaboration amongst medical training institutions in the region through transfer of credits and student and faculty transfer, and easing of labour restrictions to the movement of health professionals and of investment restrictions to foreign investments in health facilities and services; and (d) prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases. (NCDs) • To realise the UHC: (a) provide adequate financing and improve the system's efficiency; (b) provide rural-biased incentives for health personnel; (c) reach the unreached and carefully design the stages of UHC expansion; and (d) carefully design the incentive structure and develop strategies for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. • Improve health outcomes in ASEAN through (a) incorporating some elements that are under-emphasised in ASEAN post-2015 health vision; (b) improving the existing health indicators; establishing partnership with other bodies/groups; and (c) strengthening regional collaboration in producing and analysing aggregate regional and comparative data; identifying, analysing, and proposing collective solution to emerging regional health issues, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to healthcare and promotion of healthy lifestyle through (a) undertaking accessible, affordable, and sustainable information and educational drive as well as public health policies' advocacy activities to encourage healthy lifestyle and behavioural change; (b) developing and adopting a framework for unhealthy food and beverages; (c) providing adequate incentives and better working conditions for health workers; (d) encouraging public-private partnership, community empowerment, and gender-sensitive policies in improving health standard; (e) promoting capacity building programmes and training on pharmaceutical management, stability, bio-availability, bioequivalence, clinical studies, etc.; (f) establishing and maintaining an ASEAN nutrition surveillance system; and (g) promoting rational use of drugs, especially antibiotics, and promoting the use of traditional/complementary medicine and alternative medicine. • Control communicable diseases through (a) strengthening regional collaboration in prevention, control, and preparedness for emerging infectious diseases in line with international frameworks; (b) promoting sharing of best practice in improving access to primary healthcare by people at risk/vulnerable groups, especially on HIV and AIDS, malaria, dengue fever, tuberculosis, and emerging infectious disease; (c) strengthening cooperation to prevent and control infectious diseases related to climate change, natural and man-made disasters; and (d) tackling the

From Project and Background Papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
<p>documenting good practices in health service (Picazo, 2015).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen regional cooperation, coordination, and response to regional and sub-regional health concerns through (a) preparing for the population ageing phenomenon; (b) improving collection system for the disaggregated data; and (c) working and coordinating more closely with regional actors and entities to avoid duplicating structure and frameworks for health (Kumaresan and Huikuri, 2015). 	<p>issues of clean water, hygiene, sanitation, and waste management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure a drug-free ASEAN through (a) implementing preventive measures through family, school, workplace, and community-based programmes as well as public advocacy against the damage and dangers of drugs, continuing to share best practice and drug research data amongst member states; and (b) increasing access to treatment, rehabilitation and aftercare services to ensure full re-integration into society. In doing so, exchange of experience, expertise, and best practice should be strengthened as well as improving the capacity of drug-demand-reduction workers and drug control officers.

Sources: Picazo (2015), Kumaresan and Huikuri (2015), ASEAN (2009b).

Social assistance and protection for the vulnerable population is the third pathway for achieving inclusive growth. In substance, social assistance and protection works to ensure that the basic needs of the targeted poor and vulnerable groups are covered. The assistance and protection could be in the form of social insurance, such as pension systems, or in the form of social protection programmes, such as healthcare and severance payments.

The first is on pension systems. ASEAN is a region exhibiting population ageing at a relatively low per-capita income. As such, pension systems should be in place to ensure the elderly are able to obtain services that are adequate, affordable, and accessible. The pension systems in place in ASEAN vary significantly amongst member states. Additionally, social protection should be given especially to the vulnerable population, for instance, the poor, women, children, and the disabled. One of the global initiatives in this area is the social protection floor (SPF) initiative. The SPF is a nationally defined set of basic social security guarantees that ensures the needy will have access to essential healthcare and basic income security. As such, the SPF is clearly an initiative that fosters poverty reduction and achievement of inclusive society. Finally, migrant workers are amongst the vulnerable population in the region. In 2013, there were around six million migrant

workers in ASEAN, many of whom are lower-skilled, illegal, and/or work in informal sectors (Hatsukano, 2015).

To strengthen social protection in the region, the following are amongst the key recommendations (**Table 6.7**).

- **Social insurance.** Promote productive ageing and a longer economically active life for the elderly; improve the management of pension systems and healthcare systems, exploring unconventional sources; undertake financial innovations especially in the pay-out phase; and enhance professionalism of the pension systems.
- **Social protection floor.** Define an ASEAN SPF that is more consistent with ASEAN reality; develop action plans and set up national task forces on the implementation of the ASEAN SPF; develop a participatory approach in monitoring the implementation of the ASEAN SPF at the national and regional levels; and formulate a social protection adequacy index and set some target improvements for 2015.
- **Migrant workers.** ASEAN member states need to create more transparent and efficient recruitment processes for migrant workers; establish vocational training systems and centres to increase migrant workers' productivity; agree on a minimum standard of social welfare to be provided to unregistered workers; and develop mutual recognition arrangements (MRAs) on lower-skilled workers to achieve managed but freer flow of lower-skilled workers in ASEAN. The ASCC Blueprint highlights the most pressing and important action for the region at the moment, which is to put into operation the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of Rights of Migrant Workers. The ASCC Blueprint presents other important actions, including ensuring fair and comprehensive migration policies and adequate protection of all migrant workers consistent with the laws, regulations, and policies of member states.

Table 6.7. Summary of Key Recommendations on Social Assistance and Protection

From Project and Background Papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a social protection fund (SPF) according to ASEAN context. The SPF would cover basic income security for older persons, social services and protection for migrant workers, and assistance to the poor affected by disasters. It is suggested for ASEAN to develop an ASEAN Social Protection Adequacy Index. • Develop action plans for the implementation of social protection floor (SPF); set up national task force and document ASEAN best practice on SPF; continue the participatory approach in implementation, monitoring, and evaluation (Mathiapparanam, 2015). • Promote productive ageing and longer economically active life for the elderly; better understanding of the causes of diseases affecting the elderly and thereby hopefully reduce their incidence and treatment costs; improve the fiscal space for the system through the improvement of the management of pension and healthcare systems, exploration of unconventional sources and undertaking financial innovations especially in the pay-out phase; enhance professionalism of the pension system (Asher and Zen, 2015). • Improve the regulatory and support environment for migrant workers through (a) creating more transparent and efficient recruitment process for migrant workers; (b) establishing vocational training system and centres to increase migrant workers' productivity; (c) member states agreeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide social safety net and protection from the negative impacts of integration and globalisation through (a) undertaking studies on member states' social protection regime and enhance exchange of best practices through the network of social protection agencies; (b) exploring the establishment of a social insurance system to cover the informal sector; (c) formulating support system for natural disaster risk safety mechanism in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; and (d) developing action and preventive measures against Internet and pornography as well as against the use of the Internet to disrupt social harmony. • Promote and protect the rights and welfare of women, children, the elderly, and person with disabilities through (a) establishing an ASEAN commission on the promotion and protection of the rights of women and children; (b) implementing regional and international programmes on protecting women and children; (c) promoting activities on improving the quality of life and well-being of the elderly, persons with disabilities, women, and children living under poverty; (d) improving social protection for the elderly and promoting research on the elderly's health issues; (e) using gender-disaggregated data to promote gender awareness; and (f) developing an ASEAN consortium of social welfare practitioners, educators, and schools of social work.

From Project and Background Papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
<p>on a minimum standard of social welfare that needs to be provided to unregistered workers; and (d) developing mutual recognition arrangements (MRAs) on lower-skilled workers to achieve managed but freer flow of lower-skilled workers in ASEAN (Hatsukano, 2015).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and promote the rights of migrant workers through (a) implementing the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers; (b) institutionalising the ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour; (c) promoting employment protection payment of wages and adequate access to decent working and living conditions; (d) facilitating exercise of consular functions related to migrant workers; (e) facilitating data sharing and access to resources, justice, and social welfare services; and (f) strengthening procedures in the sending state and eliminating recruitment malpractices.

Sources: Mathiaparanam (2015), Asher and Zen (2015), Hatsukano (2015), ASEAN (2009b).

Finally, in support of the above-mentioned proposed strategies and actions, there is a need to **strengthen the monitoring and analysis of poverty and vulnerability** in the region. This means improving the database and analysis on the poor and the vulnerable and determining the impact of policies and programmes on these populations. As Sumarto and Moselle (2015) highlighted, there is a need to re-conceptualise poverty and welfare measurement with a greater focus on measuring multidimensional poverty. There is also a need to harmonise data collection efforts and introduce an ASEAN panel survey to enable more in-depth analysis and insights on the dynamics of poverty and vulnerability in member states and the region. Given the greater focus on inclusiveness and resiliency in ASEAN, it may be worthwhile to establish an ASEAN Poverty and Vulnerability Research Centre, or at least an ASEAN poverty and vulnerability research network and programme.

V. Engendering a Resilient and Sustainable ASEAN

The second framework for achieving the ASCC vision post-2015 is engendering a resilient and sustainable ASEAN. Given its location, ASEAN is a region most vulnerable to natural disasters. Tsunamis, earthquakes, volcano eruptions, typhoons, floods, and landslides are amongst the many frequent

natural disasters that hit the region. Natural disasters have disrupted livelihoods, interrupted the supply chain, and damaged infrastructure. In addition to life and economic loss, natural disasters also threaten food security where the poor populations are the most affected. Thus, the issue of food security in terms of availability, accessibility, utility, and stability are inherent in the resiliency agenda. Strengthened regional cooperation in the disaster risk reduction and disaster response activities are critical. ASEAN has laid the foundation of regional cooperation through the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management Emergency Response (AADMER).

Climate change is the other side of the coin in resiliency issues. In addition to raising average temperatures and sea levels, climate change also triggers more frequent natural disasters and threatens food security. As such, environmental issues or sustainable development generally is central for the resiliency of the ASEAN Community. Indeed, resiliency and sustainability are intertwined through climate change. ASEAN is the world's most vulnerable coastal region to climate change. The most vulnerable people in ASEAN to the adverse effects of climate change are the poor farmers and fisherfolk as producers, the poor as consumers, and people in the vulnerable zones. Given that the adverse effects of climate change fall most heavily on the poor, then ASEAN's drive for resiliency would need to be people-centric and not just system-oriented, anticipatory and not just reactive. ASEAN's drive towards sustainable development contributes to global action against climate change while at the same time engendering both greater resiliency of ASEAN to climate change itself as well as greater liveability of ASEAN, especially its cities, and enabling a more sustainable growth path. At the same time, however, this report highlights that environmental problems are characterised by 'wicked' problems, which are dynamic, complex, encompassing many issues and stakeholders, and thus evade straightforward lasting solutions. Herein lies both the promise and opportunity on the one hand and challenges on the other hand of the pursuit of sustainability and resiliency in ASEAN.

This report focuses on climate change and food security, disaster risk financing, natural resource management (NRM), hills to seas links, disaster risk management and financing, liveable cities, (trans-boundary) haze, energy, and the overall strategy of green growth. As is apparent in the recommendations below, a people-centred and people-oriented perspective to address the above-mentioned concerns provides a robust anchor towards enhanced resiliency and sustainability in ASEAN.

Resiliency. ASEAN member states need to invest in increased resiliency against natural disasters. Investing in resiliency towards natural disasters can go hand in hand with climate change adaptation activities. Acutely aware of the vulnerability of member states to climate change and disasters, ASEAN has given significant importance to regional cooperative efforts in **disaster management**, highlighted by the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management, the AADMER and its work programme, and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Response on Disaster Management (AHA Centre), all working under the motto of ‘One ASEAN, One Response 2020 and Beyond: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One’. Amongst the initiatives of the AHA Centre include the Disaster Emergency Logistic System for ASEAN and the AHA Centre Executive Programme. ASEAN aims to position AHA Centre ‘... as a world class disaster coordination centre and capacity building hub. ... AADMER is the common platform and regional policy backbone on disaster management, with the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management as the main driver’. In addition to the AHA Centre, other noteworthy initiatives in AADMER include the ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team and the ASEAN Disaster Management Training Institutes Network. It is worth noting that ‘... ASEAN Dialogue Partners, various partners and stakeholders, the United Nations, civil society organisations, and relevant international organisations have been engaged in the implementation’ of AADMER and AHA Centre initiatives.¹

ASEAN has come a long way in building resilience since the ratification of the AADMER, which is one of the most ambitious and comprehensive disaster risk management programmes in the world. Moving forward, ASEAN would have to grow and expand its resilience, taking note of its progress in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) and the commitments made to the Sendai Framework of Action, in order to achieve a broad vision of a resilient, inclusive, and competitive ASEAN. As such, the disaster risk management and climate change adaptation activities should be properly designed, implemented, and coordinated. The following are key recommendations for strengthening resiliency in ASEAN member states (Anbumozhi, 2015):

- Strengthened legal frameworks for improved coordination and to lead concerned subcommittees of national disaster management organisations.

¹ The information and quotes in the paragraph are taken mainly from the Chairman’s Statement of the Third Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and the Second ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM), 16 October 2014, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam.

This calls for the preparation of medium-term and long-term visions for disaster resilience as well as the greater devolution of power to local governments, especially in the large member states, to effectively respond to the needs of the people.

- Integrated risk assessment through disaster risk management and climate change adaptation lens for all new investments – whether financed by government, the private sector, or the international community – to protect the communities against hazards and economic risks.
- Formulate a detailed framework to monitor and evaluate the progress of integrated resilience capacity – potentially covering a wide array of legislative, regulatory, policy, planning, institutional, financial, and capacity building instruments and mechanism on a regular basis.
- Shift from a reactive to proactive disaster management, with most member states shifting from ex post to ex ante integrated disaster risk management philosophy. Integrating climate change adaptation and disaster risk management is increasingly important to capitalise on new financial resources.
- Member states working with other bilateral and multilateral partners and the international community to establish public programmes of financial support for improving the resilience of communities to leverage private financing.
- Member states working with regional knowledge institutes such as ERIA to establish a knowledge hub to facilitate, develop, exchange, and disseminate DRM data, best practices, and climate modelling tools.

The above-mentioned recommendations complement the ASCC Blueprint actions that call for (1) the development of regional systematic observation system to monitor the impact of climate change on vulnerable ecosystems in ASEAN; (2) the development of regional strategies to enhance capacity for adaptation, low carbon economy, and to promote public awareness to address the effects of climate change; and (3) encouragement of the participation of local governments, the private sector, non-governmental organisations, and the community to address the impacts of climate change. The last mentioned ASCC Blueprint action highlights the importance of the people-centred and people-oriented perspective of engendering resiliency and sustainability in ASEAN.

Most of the efforts of disaster risk reduction are at the national level, as expressed in the HFA and the recent Sendai Framework of Action. ASEAN has been one of the most active regional groupings in the HFA implementation and in the preparations for the Sendai meeting.

Anbumozhi's (2015) recommendations listed above can be viewed as concerted national efforts. At the regional level, given the wide-ranging initiatives under the AADMER, this report focuses on strengthening regional cooperation in disaster risk reduction and response financing. Various experiences and best practices in other regions of the world could be considered. The following are key recommendations from Liu (2015) for strengthening regional cooperation in disaster risk management financing:

- Mobilise more ASEAN-sourced funds to finance capacity building in member states for an effective disaster risk and response management.
- Provide adequate post-event response, rather than mainly focus on disaster risk reduction activities.
- Establish within-region risk pooling and mutual insurance for meeting the ex post needs. Of special interest here is an ASEAN contingency fund for post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation. In effect this is like an emergency fund in each member state that can be tapped according to some protocol and criteria for post-disaster response, recovery, and rehabilitation financing. This calls for political will from the leaders and political support from the community in each member state.

Climate change, in addition to causing economic loss, also poses a serious threat to **food security**. The abrupt change in seasonal weather patterns has caused harvest failure and various natural disasters that endanger food security. Towards people-centric resiliency and food security, it is important to understand the unequal and disaggregated impacts of climate change with significantly worse adverse effects on the food security of the poor. This is because climate change adversely affects mostly smallholder farmers and fisherfolk, the rural population, and the urban poor especially in disaster-prone areas, as well as the nutritional status of children, the elderly, and women.

Thus, it is important to bring the climate change–food security nexus into the ASCC, and not just food safety, which is the current focus of the ASCC Blueprint on food security. Toward this end are the following recommendations (Caballero-Anthony, et al., 2015):

- Recognise the inter-links between food security, climate change, and farmer livelihood by incorporating climate change adaptation for food security into the ASCC. The adaptation policies include:
 - institutional and governance measures (for example, strengthening collaboration with various research institutions);

- community-based approach (for example, using community rice reserve);
- science and technology (for example, using biotechnology and post-harvest technology);
- system innovation (for example, improving water management);
- financing and legal instruments (for example, microfinance and crop insurance); and
- climate monitoring system.
- Conduct downscaled, that is, subnational or area-specific, climate change impact assessments and improve capacity and expertise to formulate proactive adaptation policies.
- On the access dimension of food security, embark on anticipatory adaptation by addressing the root cause of vulnerability to climate change and natural hazards.
- On the utilisation dimension of food security (nutrition security), improve access to a variety of food, address nutrition volatility in poor families and nutrition support for children during the early stage of childhood and pregnant women.
- On the stability dimension of food security, diversify the sources of income for farmers and fisherfolk as well as establish microfinance instruments, legislation, and crop insurance.

Note that many of the recommendations cover the AEC, the ASCC, and the APSC. Thus, the measures could be done through shared governance amongst the three pillars of ASEAN.

Sustainable development. ASEAN has been facing environmental challenges in water management, deforestation and land degradation, air pollution, and climate change. Achieving economic growth should not only be about the accumulation of labour, physical capital, and technology but also about sustainable use of the region's environmental capital. Thus, a key challenge for sustainable development in ASEAN is the management of natural resources, which encompasses land, water, air, biodiversity, and agriculture, mining, tourism, fisheries, and forestry. Southeast Asia is a region blessed with abundant natural resources; yet it is facing intense challenges to properly manage the resources.

The ASCC Blueprint illustrates ASEAN's regional resolve in addressing the **NRM** challenges in the region. The blueprint lists a large number of wide-ranging initiatives in the areas of the promoting sustainable forest management, sustainable use of coastal and marine resources, and sustainability of freshwater resources. Amongst the many initiatives include

(1) implementation of regional strategic plans of action on forestry and water resources; (2) promotion of sustainable management and protection of resources through measures such as the creation of a network of protected areas to conserve critical habitats, integrated river basin management, promotion of reformed afforestation and reforestation under the clean development mechanism, and implementation of regional forest-related initiatives such as the 'Heart of Borneo' initiative; (3) promotion of resource sustainability in the coastal communities and communities living in and surrounding forests; and (4) strengthening of governance and enforcement measures against illegal logging, blast fishing, and other illicit activities affecting forest, coastal, and marine resources.

However, based on the results of the mid-term review, there are significant challenges in the implementation of NRM initiatives under the ASCC Blueprint, amongst which are as follows:

- (Lack of) alignment of national and sector plans in some member states
- Need for widespread involvement of all stakeholders
- Weak inter-agency coordination and partnership
- Need for institutional and legal reform towards an enabling environment for NRM in most member states
- Need for in-depth studies and information sharing

Given the importance of sustainable management of natural resources for the sustainable economic and social development of ASEAN member states and given the current significant challenges in the implementation of the ASCC Blueprint actions on NRM, the report proposes some reframing of NRM in ASEAN moving forward post-2015. Specifically, the reframing is 'NRM for better life' towards putting 'people at the centre of sustainable development' (Kalirajan, et al., 2015). This relatively more people-centric approach to NRM complements and strengthens the ASCC Blueprint NRM actions. This people-centric NRM for better life approach has three major characteristics (Kalirajan, et al., 2015):

- ***Adaptive, bottom-up approach.*** This calls for:
 - Stronger community involvement. This reflects that fact that each locality has its own environmental characteristics and natural resources. This necessarily presumes the need to build awareness of NRM issues by all stakeholders.

- Greater emphasis on learning by doing, given the risks and uncertainties inherent in erratic ecosystems and socio-economic environments.
- Feedback loops on policies and action plans on NRM from community to provincial to national levels and then to ASEAN levels for appropriate adjustments in action lines and harmonisation of policies.
- **Robust NRM monitoring.** An adaptive approach to NRM apparently necessitates robust and continuing monitoring of natural resource conditions and of programme performance. The monitoring of natural resources conditions, done in a scientific manner that ensures access to accurate and relevant information about conditions, includes examining trends of conditions using set indicators and benchmarks. Note that the ASCC Blueprint action lines, such as enhancement of capacities and human resources on R&D in the forestry sector, as well as the creation of regional systematic observation systems for climate change impacts, are consistent with the proposed enhanced scientific monitoring of natural resources conditions in ASEAN. The monitoring of performance includes examination of the nexus of the people, institutions, methodologies, and policies for the outcome of the programme.
- **‘Smart’, phased NRM action plans.** The essence of this characteristic is to set out the NRM action planning sequentially over the short term, medium term and long term, and that the action lines are preferably SMART; that is, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound.

Kalirajan, et al. (2015) discuss in greater detail this reframing of NRM in ASEAN, for ASCC post-2015.

ASEAN is rich in **biodiversity**. In fact, three member states (Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines) are amongst the 17 mega-biodiverse countries in the world; however, the three are also ‘hotspots’ from rapid loss of biodiversity. Biodiversity loss in ASEAN is serious due to rapid agricultural modernisation, changing consumer tastes, rapid urbanisation, and poverty, amongst others. Moreover, there are major problems and challenges in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in the region, including weak management of protected areas, the need for more marine protected areas, the need for widespread use of certification systems for biodiversity based products in sustainably managed protected areas, the control of invasive species, the need to strengthen in situ biodiversity linked with ex situ

conservation, and the need to strengthen staff training on plant genetic resources (Sajise, 2015).

Yet (functional) biodiversity² is important for climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience, and for sustainability. Biodiversity and natural ecosystems contribute significantly to the region's socio-economic growth. Given the growing demands on agriculture and natural resources in the region arising from actors such as the rapid modernisation of agriculture, rapid urbanisation, infrastructure development, pollution, and land conversion, food security and sustainable development in the long run would call for '... continuing access to the genetic diversity of crops and their wild relatives that provide breeders and farmers with raw materials required to sustain and improve their crops' (Sajise, 2015, p.11). There is thus a need to mainstream biodiversity conservation into various sectors of society and economy.

The ASCC Blueprint sets out a significant set of actions on biodiversity that includes the ASEAN Heritage Parks, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, sharing R&D experiences, exchange of experts and training, strengthening regional cooperation in the control of invasive alien species and of trans-boundary trade in wild fauna and flora, regional cooperation in the management of trans-boundary protected areas, and promoting local community involvement to maintain biodiversity conservation and forest health.

In addition to the above-mentioned ASCC Blueprint initiatives, this report proposes the following in support of mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in ASEAN post-2015 (Sajise, 2015):

- Highlight the value of protected areas as providers of ecosystem services towards the payment of environment services for the Protected Area Environment Fund. This will enhance the ASEAN agenda on the characterisation of protected areas as food and nutrition baskets for the countries and the region by linking it to the implementation of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) and the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System programme of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

² As noted by Sajise (2015), not all biodiversity is good. Functional diversity is 'characterized and composed of species and communities arranged over time which have the characteristics of productivity, stability, equity and resilience' (Sajise, 2015, p.9).

- Related to the previous item, develop markets and value adding to promote underutilised crops to enhance the value of biodiversity and to support indigenous communities in protected areas.
- Support and monitor the enhanced exchange of biodiversity materials (under the Nagoya Protocol) and plant genetic resources (under the ITPGRFA) through existing ASEAN networks like the Regional Cooperation in Southeast Asia for Plant Genetic Resources and networks under the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity.
- Strengthen links between national gene banks and the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) gene banks, amongst the national gene banks in ASEAN, and between the community seedbanks and the national gene banks. This calls for the protection of intellectual property and capacity building at the community level.
- Promote participatory plant breeding (by farmers) and ASEAN biodiversity field schools.
- Strengthen coordination amongst the ministries of natural resources, agriculture and forestry, local government units, and the academe.
- Develop an ASEAN consortium on research for biodiversity and climate change, preferably linked to the programme on climate change for agriculture and food security of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research. This can grow from the Research Consortium on Climate Change in Thailand and with universities in ASEAN that have climate change programmes (for example, the University of the Philippines at Los Baños), and can possibly be linked with the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity.
- Develop a monitoring and early warning system for loss of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, initially through the development of tools and methods of assessing this loss. This initiative can be an activity of the ASEAN Consortium on Research for Biodiversity and Climate Change and the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity.
- Expand and improve education and training. Increasingly, the interest in human resource capacity with respect to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) is from plants to molecular aspects and from the field to the laboratory. There are only very few specialists in the basic areas of PGRFA in the region.
- Strengthen promotion of public awareness on biodiversity and of the value of PGRFA conservation and use. Of interest here is the recognition of outstanding programmes for biodiversity conservation at the community, country, and regional levels through the auspices of ASEAN. This also includes

the need for better information coordination and of the right materials to be used in the public awareness campaigns with respect to PGRFA.

Community participation can promote nature conservation, as in the case of the Connectivity of Hill, Human, and Ocean (CoHHO) framework in Japan. The framework emphasises the connectivity of hills, humans, and oceans, an apt focus not only for Japan but also for most of ASEAN. The connectivity brings out the multidisciplinary nature of environmental issues. Equally important, the CoHHO framework was brought out starkly in the ‘the sea is longing for the forest’ movement that was started by an oyster farmer in Japan in 1989. The following are key recommendations to strengthen the grassroots movement towards environmental conservation in ASEAN (Tanaka and Hatakeyama, 2015):

- Address the environmental challenges through a holistic approach, for example, addressing river pollution problems by conserving the watershed.
- As most member states face the sea, the conservation of mangrove forests is critical to sustain coastal fisheries. The mangrove estuarine ecosystems themselves are intimately linked with upstream conditions; thus mangroves are clearly a tropical example of connectivity between forests and seas.
- Change the value judgement of present generations by taking account of future generations through environmental education for children. In doing so, create a system of locally based environmental education for children. Overall, balance the economy and environment for a sustainable future.
- Establish CoHHO-like studies in member states.

Promoting liveable cities, controlling in-country and trans-boundary pollution, and accelerating clean energy production and use all contribute to sustainable development and green growth. ASEAN will be preponderantly urban by 2025, and cities will be the engine of growth in most of ASEAN. As such, social welfare is affected by the quality of life in cities; hence, the challenge of engendering greater liveability and sustainability of cities in the region. Two important elements of this drive for greater liveability and sustainability are the control of pollution in the cities, including trans-boundary pollution (for example, haze), as well as the pursuit of green energy. At the same time, it is worth noting that it is in cities (and provinces) where there is greater opportunity and probability of stronger coordination of all relevant government agencies and institutions as well as greater participation of various stakeholders. Thus, cities offer as many opportunities as challenges towards a more sustainable, dynamic, and resilient ASEAN.

The fostering of liveable, low carbon ASEAN cities is an ‘... integrated approach that needs buy-in (commitment) from city executives, active involvement of the public and private sectors, flow of private sector investment, and cross-sectoral implementation of best practices and green/smart technologies and services’ (Kumar, 2015, p.27). Kumar (2015) proposes an ASEAN framework for liveable low carbon city development with the initial step of defining city vision and development as well as identifying key city stakeholders and the building of the core team and champions for the initiative. The next step of measuring emission baselines, identifying emission reduction opportunities and priorities, and from which the city identifies its targets, develop its action plans and interventions. The plan calls for setting out the implementation pathway and the establishment of a working group that oversees the implementation. At the ASEAN level, the regional cooperation involves sharing knowledge and experiences, learning from best practices, and developing regional support mechanisms.

Drawing from the above-mentioned framework for liveable, low carbon city development in ASEAN, the proposed ASCC agenda towards liveable ASEAN cities include the following (Kumar, 2015):

- Megacities and second-tier cities and towns measure emissions, pollution, and other environmental parameters. As indicated earlier, this serves as the baseline from which cities develop and implement workable emission reduction strategies and other strategies related to water, sanitation, and transport, amongst others. A corollary to this is the development of city indicators at the national and ASEAN levels that can provide impetus and incentives for cities to promote low-carbon growth.
- Initiate city-based working groups, drawn from local partners – the local government, the private sector, universities, and civil society members – that help develop the plans and activities and a bottom-up approach to city growth and greater liveability of the city.
- Encourage cities to initiate local policies toward green, low-carbon development that also serve as a prototype for expansion and upscaling at the national and possibly regional levels. This is because not all innovative low-carbon policies need to be initiated at the national level. Related to this is for national policies to be supportive of cities’ initiatives of mainstreaming low carbon, clean, resilient urban development in city development plans.
- Upscale existing ASEAN Initiative on Environmentally Sustainable Cities from the current 25 cities to at least 100 cities in ASEAN.

- Develop a knowledge management and information centre to share experiences and lessons learned on climate change resilient measures and financing schemes to maximise regional cooperation.
- Enhance international collaboration and sharing of experiences on low-carbon, green growth in cities.

Although urban pollution is an important concern in a number of ASEAN cities, it is the **(trans-boundary) haze problem** arising from land and forest fires that every year regularly bedevils cities and rural areas primarily in the Sumatra–Singapore–Johor (Malaysia) region that has been a major ASEAN concern. Estimates indicate large economic and health costs to affected areas in the region. That ASEAN significantly prioritizes the (trans-boundary) haze pollution problem is reflected by the Regional Haze Action Plan in 1997 and the ASEAN Agreement on Trans-boundary Haze Pollution in 2002. The ASCC Blueprint includes actions that include the operationalisation of the ASEAN Agreement, ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Trans-boundary Haze Pollution Control, and the securing of funds for the ASEAN Trans-boundary Haze Pollution Control Fund. Indonesia's ratifying the ASEAN agreement in September 2014 bodes well for joint efforts in the region to monitor, prevent, and mitigate the (trans-boundary) haze pollution problem.

Note that, while it is the trans-boundary aspects of haze pollution that have been the focus of ASEAN attention, the local effects of haze pollution are as serious as the trans-boundary effects. Thus, the haze pollution problem is as much a domestic problem as it is a (sub)regional problem. It is also worth noting that current high-resolution satellite and remote-sensing technology allows for real-time monitoring of land and forest fires. Also, it may be worth noting that about half of the fires in Sumatra have been within palm oil, pulpwood, and timber concessions. A number of the concessions in Sumatra are owned by foreigners, especially from Malaysia and Singapore. Finally, the trans-boundary haze pollution, along with other environmental challenges, are characterised as multidimensional or wicked problems. It should be seen not only as an environmental issue but also as agricultural–forestry land use and governance issues and an issue of effective internalisation at the local and national levels. As such, addressing the problem would require a holistic and inter-sectoral approach and action plan.

To dramatically reduce the intensity and frequency of the (trans-boundary) haze problem, the following are proposed (Sunchindah, 2015):

- Strengthen participatory monitoring involving various stakeholders and with the use of satellite maps of fires and concessions to help determine causes and accountability.
- Strengthen domestic capacity and (sub)regional cooperation (involving primarily Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore) in comprehensive investigations of the fires to determine and prosecute accountable parties, including persons or entities from Malaysia and Singapore if so proven accountable.
- Strengthen domestic capacity and regional cooperation in firefighting, early warning systems, and monitoring.
- Educate farmers and locals on the economic, environmental, and legal consequences of burning forest and peatlands.
- Strengthen incentives for increased use of better land use management practices and technologies.

It may be best to put the above-mentioned recommendations into a protocol to the ASEAN Agreement on Trans-boundary Haze Pollution.

Energy is one of the most important lifelines in the modern world. It is also viewed as an effective way to end extreme poverty and promote inclusiveness. Around 20 percent of ASEAN's population lack access to clean and modern electricity. Not only faced with challenges to achieve universal access to energy, member states are also confronted with the challenge of generating clean energy. Thus, affordable and clean **energy** has both inclusiveness and sustainability dimensions. Access to affordable and cleaner energy is essential for improving the livelihood of poor households, promote economic growth and opportunities especially in the rural areas, and support the provision of social services and essential input for sustainable development goals (SDGs) in ASEAN countries. Clean energy is also important for sustainable development because the production and consumption of energy from fossil fuels are a major source of CO₂ emission and therefore of global warming that leads to climate change. The pursuit of clean energy is essentially a pursuit of renewable energy, primarily from geothermal, hydro, solar, and wind. The last two have been the most written about in recent years because the marked and continuing reduction in prices per unit of parts and materials, especially of solar panels, has made solar energy very promising even if the present cost of producing energy from fossil fuels and gas remains lower.

Interestingly, one key reason for the relatively high cost of producing energy from renewables which is that the sources tend to be in remote places that are far from the grid makes renewables promising as an energy

resource for inclusiveness purposes. This is because the poor without access to power are in the rural and remote areas that are not linked to the grid. Moreover, the land cost of solar or wind power in the rural and remote areas is much lower than in more developed areas close to the power grid. Thus, there is significant merit in encouraging renewables as the energy source for the poor, energy starved rural and remote areas and islands.

Nonetheless, renewable energy production is capital intensive, which means that the unit cost of energy produced is reduced significantly with the significant rise in the scale of production. However, given the relatively higher energy cost from renewables compared to oil or coal, it is the latter that remains the preferred source of base load energy. Thus, a substantial shift towards renewable energy as source of power would involve creative and flexible government support policies, specifically:

- **Flexible redistributive and transformative public expenditures to remove the bottlenecks towards renewable energy.** This effectively calls for government support expenditures for renewable energy in isolated, poor, and rural communities. In effect, pro-poor government spending on renewable energy becomes a foundation for inclusive growth given the importance of energy as a production input anywhere.
- **Flexible subsidies and banking sector development for increasing the rate of renewable energy enterprises that also create rural jobs.** Enhancing the job creation from clean energy production may call for skill development, specialised job training, and some financial development including new models of microfinance.
- **Broad-based fiscal reforms for inclusive and renewable energy business models.** This means the shift in the burden of taxation to ecological bads (for example, pollution). However, there is little progress on this in ASEAN and in many parts of the world. In the meantime, the interim solution is to provide subsidies to the production of renewable energy through the imposition of a tax on all energy users through the so-called feed-in tariff as is implemented in the Philippines.³

The issue of broad fiscal reforms raised above is one of the challenges of promoting **green growth**. Green growth is decoupling economic growth

³ Analytically, the feed-in tariff for renewable energy policy of the Philippines which is paid for by all energy consumers in the country is like a simultaneous energy tax (with energy from the more pollutive fuel-based energy) imposed on all energy consumers, the revenues of which are used to subsidise the production of renewable energy which has higher average production cost and therefore has to be paid a higher price.

from emissions and pollution, which implies a new growth paradigm where resource efficiency and job creation are achieved as co-benefits. The drivers of green growth are technology and knowledge on the one hand and finance on the other; in both cases, the private sector plays a central role. Encouraging the private sector to develop and use technology and knowledge as well as financing in support of a green growth paradigm entails a supportive enabling environment. This involves the following:

- Well-designed regulatory frameworks and appropriate and supporting policies, including appropriate pricing of natural resource services and goods as well as ecological bads.
- Prioritisation of government expenditure in support of resource conservation and efficient energy use and expenditure limits on resource-depleting activities (for example, eliminate subsidies on fossil fuel-based energy).
- Use of market-based instruments such as eco-labelling programmes.
- Capacity building, training, and education.
- Strengthened trade and governance systems through regional cooperation.

Finally, opting for ‘grow dirty now and clean up later’ can be too costly for ASEAN because some environmental degradation is not reversible. Thus, it may well be that ASEAN takes on the challenge and embarks on green growth trajectory moving forward post-2015.

VI. Engendering a Deep Sense of Commonality and Belongingness and Shared ASEAN Identity and Destiny

ASEAN is a construct, a deliberate melding together of member states with different colonial histories, languages, and cultures, through regional cooperation in order to solve intra-regional and extra-regional political–security problems and concerns (initially), to deepen regional (economic) integration (presently), and to foster community building into the ASEAN Community (increasingly). Presently, an ASEAN identity, as a means of mutual identification and differentiation from non-members, is largely institutional. This is reflected by all the ASEAN institutions, programmes, and initiatives, and perhaps more visibly, the ASEAN summits and the many

ASEAN-related meetings.⁴ It is also reflected in the international relations arena where an ASEAN identity is viewed in the context of the so-called ASEAN Way of *musyawarah* and *mufakat*. The major challenge is to deepen the ASEAN identity into an ASEAN communal identity.

The challenge of engendering an ASEAN communal identity means:

- Making ASEAN deeply felt by ASEAN peoples: ‘we feeling’
- Making ASEAN deeply owned by ASEAN peoples: ‘ours feeling’
- Engendering a deep sense of ASEAN commonality and destiny in a socio-cultural sense: ‘we are in this together’

In addition, there is the challenge of engendering a deep appreciation of the ‘cultural foundations of a cosmopolitan sense of ASEAN-ness’ (Khoo and Fan, 2015). All of the above call for purposeful initiatives.

Dig the past for the future. The first is to understand the shared, hybrid, and fuzzy past of ASEAN nations. ASEAN is home to some of the ‘messiest’ communities in the world who share overlapping identities. Acknowledging the interconnected, fluid, and hybrid past of Southeast Asia is the first step towards resurrecting and rendering the past to make it relevant and insightful to the making of ASEAN Community post-2015. This means the need to bring out Southeast Asia’s precolonial history of centuries of cooperation, trade, and mutual exchange amongst communities; of a region as a network of interrelated and mutually dependent communities and not only conflicts which undoubtedly also happened. Pre-war Southeast Asia was a home of many diasporic and nomadic communities that were fluid, hybrid, and multi-layered (Noor, 2015). This reflects relative freedom of movement of people within, to, and from the region as can possibly be surmised during a period without nation states with immigration barriers. It is this co-mingling of various peoples with different cultures that bring out that ASEAN’s diverse cultural traditions as the ‘distillations of shared historical processes and diasporic experiences.’

Being at the crossroads of the maritime route between China and India, precolonial ASEAN communities and cities hosted peoples from near and far (including from the Middle East) as best exemplified by precolonial Melaka, the region’s entrepôt city before there was Singapore, where, as the Portuguese explorer Tome Pires described, ‘at any given time, at least ninety different languages were being spoken’ (Khoo and Fan, 2015, p.2). In effect, at that time, if precolonial Melaka were the basis, the ASEAN region was ‘as

⁴ It is sometimes jokingly described that the ASEAN that we know is ASEAN in the hotel lobbies and not ASEAN in the streets.

global as globalisation gets’ and, to some extent, was ‘cosmopolitan’. It is this co-mingling of peoples and communities with little policy imposed barriers in the region that helped bring forth an ASEAN amalgam and/or a fusion of cultures.

Interestingly, ASEAN, with its AEC and ASCC Blueprints, is like a facilitated journey to the essence of the shared and hybrid pre-nation states past in the structured future of an ASEAN Community in the context of the present age of nation states. The AEC Blueprint’s objectives of free flow of goods, services, capital, and skilled labour is like going back to the precolonial period when there were little barriers to trading, investing, and movement of people. The ASCC Blueprint future brings back to some extent the precolonial past of the intermingling of peoples and cultures that give rise to hybridised cultures and as such of shared cultures.

With regard to culture, as the region shares overlapping cultures, the regional efforts to preserve the cultural heritage and cultural identity are critical. In the past, the syncretic interaction of cultures engendering greater commonality amongst cultures enlivens and brings forth dynamism and innovation in cultural pursuits. As ASEAN now moves towards greater integration, the cost of personal and cultural interaction would be much lower, which then could present the opportunity to bring back and strengthen the ASEAN cultural identity.

Table 6.8 presents recommendations, drawn from Noor (2015) and Khoo and Fan (2015), on digging up the past and preserving the cultural identity in the region in order to build a ‘we feeling’ amongst the ASEAN peoples in the present and the future. Amongst the recommendations are the following:

- Include ‘wider, more nuanced and more inclusive account of regional history’ in member states’ national history curricula. Related to this is the encouragement of more nuanced studies of Southeast Asian history.
- Undertake exhaustive studies and documentation of cultural traditions within the region, and ‘unravel the cultural ties’ amongst member states.
- Examine elements of an ASEAN identity, especially the distillation of diaspora and cosmopolitan shared historical experiences of the region, which was an ‘... important meeting point for the convergence of cultures, religions and histories’ during the precolonial era, and the implied experience of pluralism and syncretism. As such, ASEAN’s cultural heritage would be best

viewed not from the lens of nationalism (Khoo and Fan, 2015) but of shared heritage amongst member states.

- Disseminate extensively the new ASEAN history and cultural studies.
- Invest in culture. This means freer movement of artists, historians, amongst others, within the region. It means bringing more the shared experiences and commonalities amidst cultural diversities in the region into education curriculums.
- Consider the establishment of a Regional Competitive Fund jointly with the private sector to encourage research and studies on ASEAN history, cultural traditions, and elements of an ASEAN identity (the first three items above).

Table 6.8 also presents the ASCC Blueprint actions that include the establishment of an ASEAN cultural centre in each member state, promotion of cultural tourism, development of ASEAN courses, and risk assessment and preparation of emergency responses for the threatened cultural heritage, in addition to the documentation and archiving of ASEAN cultural heritage.

Table 6.8. Summary of Key Recommendations on Understanding ASEAN’s Shared, Hybrid, and Fuzzy Past

From Project and Background Papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the sense of common identity through inclusion of a wider, more nuanced, and more inclusive account of regional history, pattern of movement/migration, and historical development in national education curriculum (Noor, 2015). • Preserve the cultural identity in the region through (a) commissioning exhaustive study and documenting the region’s cultural tradition; (b) creating an ASEAN-based funding system for research, documentation, publication, and projects on ASEAN culture and promote cultural exchange programmes, forums, and publications; and (c) organising an ASEAN Festival of Culture and encourage and facilitate free movement of cultural artists within the region (Khoo and Fan, 2015). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve and promote ASEAN cultural heritage through (a) documenting and managing ASEAN cultural heritage through the use of archives, e.g. records and archives of ASEAN Secretariat; (b) undertaking risk assessment and preparing emergency response for the threatened cultural heritage as well as developing national/regional instrument to protect, preserve, and promote cultural heritage; (c) promoting cultural tourism, traditional handicraft village, and community participation; (d) establishing an ASEAN Cultural Centre in each member state to promote capacity building in heritage management and interactions amongst ASEAN scholars, artists, and heritage media practitioners; and (e) including teaching of common values and cultural heritage in school curriculums; develop courses on ASEAN studies in all education levels, and support learning of ASEAN languages.

Sources: Noor (2015), Khoo and Fan (2015), ASEAN (2009b).

Creative economy and film. Film and the creative economy are two important channels through which a deeper understanding of the diversity and commonality of ASEAN peoples and cultures can be fostered and strengthened. At the same time, robust firm and creative industries are potentially important economic and employment drivers in member states. Film is a medium that can reach and translate to everyday life. It is a personal, accessible, and powerful medium of cultural expression information and engagement. The film sector can play a significant role in enhancing greater awareness, understanding, and interconnectedness towards a greater sense of belongingness of ASEAN peoples; to wit (De La Rosa, 2015):

- Promotion of ASEAN awareness and a sense of community by projecting the common threads, norms, values, and traditions that make the ASEAN community unique
- Preservation and promotion of ASEAN cultural heritage
- Promotion of cultural creativity and industry
- Engagement with the community, with many platforms of engagement; for example, cinema, TV, and the Internet.

The film sector is part of the creative economy, and the creative economy is a large sector in some member states (for example, Indonesia). As Pangestu (2015) points out, the creative economy, in addition to providing an economic contribution, also has an impact on the overall business climate, improving social life, strengthening the brand or image of a region, and promoting innovation. At its core, the creative economy is to ‘mainstream creativity and innovation as the mover in all other sectors’ (Pangestu, 2015, p.5). With the infusion of creativity and innovation, the cultural resources of member states become potentially important economic assets that can provide employment and benefits to the people, while at the same time enhancing the sense of a national and regional identity and helping ensure that traditions and cultural heritage remain vibrant and living. The challenge and opportunity are to draw from the cultural resources and make modern and contemporary applications through creativity and innovation, or as Pangestu (2015) puts it, ‘traditional in value but contemporary in spirit’, and thereby create economic value.

Table 6.9 presents the recommendations on enhancing the film and creative economy sectors as dynamic and contemporary channels of shaping and reshaping national and regional identities. Amongst the recommendations towards the development of the creative economy are the following:

- Implement education curriculum from the early years of education that promotes creativity while preserving local wisdom.
- Establish the regulatory regime, incentive structure, and support mechanisms (for example, financing and mentoring) that promote creative entrepreneurs and the creation of a business model that suits the creative (including film) industry.
- Address other strategic issues for creative economy development, especially on the quantity and quality of human resources; infrastructure, raw materials, and technology; and appreciation for creative products and services.
- Implement the AEC Blueprint and the ASCC Blueprint measures. It is noted that the growth of the creative economy in the region is also dependent on the implementation of the facilitation and liberalisation initiatives in the AEC Blueprint, especially on trade in goods and services, intellectual property rights, and travel and movement of people within the region. Similarly, the development of the creative economy in the region interfaces with the ASCC, especially with respect to education, the development of creative cities, the building of national identity, and enhancing of cultural heritage.

The ASCC Blueprint also includes the promotion of cultural creativity and industry through collaboration and networking as well as joint training amongst SMEs in member states involved in the creative industries.

Table 6.9. Summary of Key Recommendations on Enhancing the Role of Film and Creative Economy Sectors

From Project and Background Papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of film to enhance ASEAN identity through (a) undertaking studies to examine and compare the existing laws, policies and taxes on film industry in ASEAN with a view to harmonise the standards and stimulate free flow of ASEAN film in the region; (b) establishing a network of cine club or film societies; (c) establishing an ASEAN Film Development Fund and undertake a feasibility study on having regional film facilities; and (d) conducting workshops and training programmes on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of film to enhance ASEAN identity through: (a) exchanges of television programmes; (b) utilising new media technologies, e.g. digital broadcasting; and (c) promoting ASEAN media industry collaboration. • Promote ASEAN cultural creativity and industry through (a) facilitating collaboration and networking between small and medium-sized cultural enterprises (SMCEs) and organise regular training programmes for the SMCEs; (b) exchanging best practices and promoting

From Project and Background Papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
<p>filmmaking to students and recognise the excellence in film making through ASEAN Film Awards (De la Rosa, 2015).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in cultural heritage and develop creative economy through (a) implementing education curriculums which promote creativity in the young population as well as preserve the local wisdoms; (b) creating a database on the resources and alternatives to different types of natural resources used in creative products; (c) promoting ‘creativepreneurs’ and creation of a business model that suits the creative industry; (d) ensuring the regulatory set up and incentive structure to be conducive in the financing and mentoring issues faced by ‘creativepreneurs’; (e) linking access to market and networks domestically and internationally; and provide access to technology and infrastructure; and (f) finding the balance of providing the level of freedom for prolific creation and related regulations (Pangestu, 2015). 	<p>cooperation with ASEAN dialogue partner countries; (c) supporting young people’s creativity and original ideas; and (d) promoting marketing and distribution of cultural products and services.</p>

Sources: De la Rosa (2015), Pangestu (2015), ASEAN (2009b).

The film industry will also benefit from the recommendations on the creative economy listed above. Additionally, amongst the recommendations towards enhancing the role of film in engendering a deep sense of commonality and belongingness towards a shared ASEAN identity are the following:

- Encourage joint film production amongst member states.
- Work out common standards and incentives to stimulate free flow of ASEAN films throughout ASEAN.
- Establish an ASEAN Film Development Fund and ASEAN film awards.
- Include FILM ASEAN as a member of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting Responsible for Information Working Group on Content and Production.

The ASCC Blueprint actions also include the exchange of films amongst member states and support for the use of new technology for film production.

Enhancing awareness of, and engagement by, the ASEAN peoples.

The awareness of ASEAN amongst ASEAN peoples is modest but growing; however, the understanding of it is still fuzzy and poor. The good news though is that the private sector initiatives that aim to have people understand ASEAN are growing. Arguably, many private sector forums and seminars on ASEAN have focused more on the AEC, specifically the expectation of the realisation of the AEC in 2015, and with that the expected creation of a single market and production base in the region. Nonetheless, this serves as an opportunity as well as a challenge. The opportunity lies in that the deepening of economic links amongst member states as a result of the implementation of the AEC must necessarily encourage ASEAN peoples to know more about other members, which are now sources of some of their imports, markets of their exports, and destinations for their travel made easier by the AEC measures. At the same time, there remains the challenge of ASEAN peoples knowing more of the varied initiatives under the ASCC.

However, much more than knowing and understanding ASEAN, the key challenge is to enhance people's participation and sense of ownership of ASEAN and its initiatives. The ASEAN Charter emphasised 'participation of all for the benefit of all'. Arguably, the greater participation of more people in ASEAN and its initiatives, the greater is the likelihood that there would be a greater feeling of ownership of ASEAN by the ASEAN peoples. In effect, participation of all for the sense of ownership of it (ASEAN) all. Indeed, the deep engagement and participation of the ASEAN peoples in ASEAN processes and initiatives are central to the theme of a people-oriented and people-centred ASEAN. **This fundamentally requires ASEAN and member states not only to communicate more to the public but also to develop a strong culture of consultation, collaboration, and engagement with the public.**

Acutely aware of its importance, ASEAN through the ASCC Blueprint has a significant number of initiatives towards the promotion of greater awareness and a sense of community as well as greater engagement of the public on ASEAN, with the focus on communication, linking with local governments and schools to promote ASEAN culture, use of ASEAN symbols and undertaking ASEAN events like sporting events, and encouragement of the establishment of ASEAN associations in each member state (**Table 6.10**). Echoing and complementing the ASCC Blueprint actions are the following

recommendations toward greater awareness, enhanced participation, and greater sense of ownership (and therefore of responsibility for its success) of ASEAN by the ASEAN peoples, drawn from this project's background papers:

- Establish a well-coordinated, institutionalised information campaign and socialisation mechanism. This may involve the creation of an ASCC task force on outreach and communications as well as strengthening links with the private sector, including media and business.
- It is ideal for major ASEAN programmes to have built-in awareness raising and outreach component.
- Emphasise the ASCC more, and less of the AEC, in communication programmes. Note that this recommendation and those of the previous first two recommendations above may be included in the ASEAN Master Plan on Communications.
- Undertake ASEAN-centric projects that have a direct impact on ASEAN peoples; for example, 'ASEAN lanes' at immigration counters in member states, a 'common ASEAN visa', and a common 'ASEAN time' instead of four time zones at present.
- Greater private sector (business and CSOs, amongst others) role in ASEAN committees and working groups, but with guidelines and clear expected contributions by the private sector participants. Possible contributions of the private sector to the ASEAN process may include the articulation of impacts of actual and proposed ASEAN measures and initiatives, the provision of technical expertise, and a private sector scorecard of implementation of ASEAN measures.
- Greater private sector role in national strategy, policy, and programme design and evaluation in member states. An example of private sector and public sector collaboration is Malaysia's PEMUDAH Task Force on simplifying business regulations, which effectively included improving trade facilitation processes that are supportive of the AEC Blueprint measures in trade facilitation and non-tariff measures. There can be more similar public-private partnerships on areas under the ASCC; for example, disaster risk reduction, education and human resource development, and culture.
- Joint collaboration between ASEAN, the member states, and the private sector in the dissemination of and deeper public engagement on ASEAN.
- Greater people-to-people connectivity. This involves private sector to private sector links and programmes, for example, volunteer programmes funded and undertaken by the private sector of one member state in another member state. Such programmes can be scaled up to a region-wide programme involving the private sector.

Table 6.10. Summary of Key Recommendations on Enhancing Awareness and Interconnectedness towards Greater Belongingness

From Project and Background Papers	From ASCC Blueprint 2009–2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the awareness and interconnectedness through (a) creating a 10-year public outreach/stakeholder engagement strategic plan and a committee or task force on outreach and communications; (b) devoting special outreach programmes for the vulnerable, marginalised groups and those who might be adversely affected by the regional integration initiatives; (c) upgrading the capabilities of the ASEAN Secretariat and other entities through enhanced facilities and well-trained personnel; and (d) organising dialogue sessions to exchange information and share experiences on how ASEAN could avoid or overcome the mistakes or potential pitfalls of closer integration (Tan and Sunchindah, 2015). • Enhance people’s participation and sense of ownership through (a) deep engagement with the private business sector and civil society organisations; (b) articulating the impact of actual and proposed ASEAN policies and initiatives on the lives of people and communities, and ensuring regional advocacies are rooted in the national level; (c) private sector organisations to develop and present their evaluation of implementation progress and impact of AEC measures; (d) promoting a responsive regulatory regime in member states and ASEAN; and (e) greater dissemination of information and communication to the public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote ASEAN awareness and sense of community by (a) developing regional and national communication plans; (b) encouraging all ASEAN sectoral bodies to intensify their efforts and undertake coordinated production of print, broadcast, and multimedia materials on ASEAN; (c) engaging mainstream media in promoting ASEAN programmes and projects; increasing media exchanges and networking; promoting exchange of television programmes, and promoting a culture of tolerance amongst media personnel; (d) supporting school activities on ASEAN awareness and including studies on ASEAN arts and culture in the curriculum; (e) establishing links amongst ASEAN cities, promoting ASEAN sporting events, encouraging the use of ASEAN anthems and symbols, and book exchange programmes amongst libraries; (f) encouraging the establishment of ASEAN associations at the national level and promoting dialogue amongst civil society; and (g) utilising new media technologies and promoting youth exchange programmes. • Engage the community through (a) the ASEAN-affiliated non-governmental organisations in the ASEAN community building process; (b) convening the ASEAN Social Forum and ASEAN Civil Society Conference; (c) establishing an ASEAN volunteer programme and supporting young volunteers undertaking emergency or humanitarian mission; and (d) sharing public information on network and database of ASEAN for useful flow of information.

Sources: Tan and Sunchindah (2015), ASEAN (2009b).

VII. Concluding Remarks

An inclusive, sustainable, resilient, and dynamic community that engages and benefits the people is what ASEAN aspires to in the post-2015 period. This vision reflects ASEAN's drive towards the building of an ASEAN Community that is people-oriented and people-centred. This report has outlined the framework and key recommendations for achieving the vision. The key recommendations presented are necessarily context specific; nonetheless, the factors for its successful implementation would be similar.

In realising the vision, the ASCC would need to prioritise for greater impact in light of the large number and wide-ranging initiatives in the ASCC Blueprint. The ASCC would also need to mobilise more resources to implement the initiatives. A pooling mechanism combined with effective targeting and good management of resources is needed. In doing so, the ASCC would need to strengthen its cooperation with ASEAN dialogue partners as well as using better databases, for example, through an ASEAN panel survey, so that its social policy intervention programme is well targeted and well managed. Better monitoring and communication efforts are also critical to ensure effective and broad-based support for the initiatives. The community, civil society organisations, the private sector, and youth organisations are amongst the many stakeholders with which ASEAN needs to cooperate.

It is hoped that the combination of the proposed framework and specific policy recommendations as well as key success factors outlined in this report will result in the ASCC Blueprint 2016–2025 that is transformative and be successfully implemented with broad support from the whole ASEAN Community.