

**Promoting Work-Life Balance for Women's Economic Empowerment
In the Context of ASEAN Integration**

Recommendations to ASEAN Governments

1. As the ability to work is an expression of nobility that contributes to self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-growth of an individual

We call all ASEAN member states, public and private institutions, individuals and communities to

- **Increase job opportunities for all whether through job sharing, permanent part-time or other work arrangements;**
- **Recognize home-based work, 'unpaid' housework and the informal sector;**
- **Promote 'working from home' in all forms with the same protection and privileges of a formal sector employer or employee;**
- **Accord national and societal respect to homemakers;**
- **Accord the right to work, learn and play for disabled persons, patients with chronic illnesses, women in life's transitions, and other marginalized groups**

2. Given the low rate of female labour force participation in ASEAN countries

We call all ASEAN member states, public and private institutions, individuals and communities to

- **Ensure greater participation of women in the labour force through**
 - **Innovative, family/health/safety-friendly work schemes;**
 - **Entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, e-entrepreneurship and micro-entrepreneurship development;**
 - **Participation in the digital economy for all women that would allow women to reconcile work and family responsibilities which also provide self-fulfillment and spiritual attainment**
- **Enact and enforce labour laws and standards related to full-time and part-time work in the form of flexi-work, home-based work, compressed week,**

telecommuting and other work arrangements which have direct impact on work-life balance;

- **Configure flexible work and telework arrangements not only as a one-size-fit-all policy but agility to offer on a case to case basis;**
- **Provide financial, organizational and infrastructural incentives to enable employers, corporates, entrepreneurs to collectively implement successful work-life balance arrangements for all involved stakeholders;**
- **Align labour market policies with prevailing and future family structure within the context of livable cities;**
- **Provide an enabling environment in a more institutionalized manner for affordable and reliable childcare and elderly care facilities at home or at work**

3. Given the cultural perceptions and centrality of work in family life and personal lifestyle

We call all ASEAN member states, public and private institutions, individuals and communities to

- **Make a paradigm shift in work and home arrangements to empower women to manage both productive and reproductive work especially with the use of ICT for both urban and rural populations;**
- **Be educated towards a social transformation which brings about societal attitudinal shifts from mere materialistic empowerment to non-materialistic achievement such as passion for work, happiness and the practice of universal humane values**

4. Based on the call for greater work-life balance by the youth and the learnings and case studies from the thematic sessions at the Conference;

We urge all ASEAN member states, public and private institutions, individuals and communities to

- **Educate everyone across ages about the importance of work-life balance and the need for it which can contribute to the well-being in all aspects of our lives as family members, friends, and beneficiaries;**
- **Mobilize and generate awareness in employers and the workers the need for work-life balance and it can be achieved by men and women in the labour**

market;

- **Convince and assist employers to use work-life balance measures for talent retention, productivity enhancement, and corporate social responsibility**

5. Given that ASEAN economic integration means building inclusiveness

We call all ASEAN member states, public and private institutions, individuals and communities to

- **Establish a collaborative network between all champions of work-life balance for the economic empowerment of women;**
- **Create and facilitate more forums, spaces, and opportunities for those with disabilities, indigenous groups, marginalized and vulnerable groups to contribute to an ongoing conversation and discourse on sustainable development and creation of livable cities for the people by the people**
- **To champion the right for work-life balance as a human right, and promote regional co-operation to exercise this human right in all its 10 member states by the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR)**
- **To adopt the realization of 'work-life balance' as a key milestone to achieve in [AEC Blueprint 2025](#) so as to forge a highly integrated, competitive, innovative and dynamic region with a more resilient, inclusive, and people-oriented, people-centred community. National governments to construct inclusive policies and national machineries to promote all aspects of work-life balance for both urban and rural areas**

6. Given that the rural squeeze and flight to the cities which directly impact on the practice of agriculture and other food production and processing

We urge all ASEAN member states, public and private institutions, individuals and communities to...

- **Encourage and facilitate the revitalization of the rural economy with policies, education and capacity building, financial assistance, appropriate technology, appropriate infrastructural development and sustainable community development;**
- **Uplift rural women and families from poverty through creativity,**

perseverance, and innovations resulting in workable projects and programs which also protect Mother Nature and traditional cultures

7. Given the high rate of migration from rural to urban as well as less developed to more developed economies

We urge all ASEAN member states, public and private institutions, individuals and communities to

- **Learn the best practices within ASEAN and outside of ASEAN in creative development of rural resources to retain human capital in the villages and small towns;**
- **Learn the best practices within ASEAN and outside of ASEAN to form national machineries to retain and maximize potential of national talent pools;**
- **Promote equal and fair treatment to all who emigrate to cities and ASEAN countries for employment;**
- **Provide incentives to employers to allocate time and allow Internet access to communicate and spend time with their children and family back home;**
- **Provide incentives and assistance to city/municipality councils, telecenters, and community centers to provide free or low-cost Internet to migrants and foreign workers to contact families back home through video-conferencing**

8. Given the great impact the prevalence and usage of Information, Communication Technology (ICT) and the inequitable Internet access over ASEAN countries

We strongly call for all ASEAN member states, public, and private ICT industry captains to

- **Invest more for better ICT infrastructure;**
- **Provide affordable Internet for everyone, everywhere, and every time;**
- **Plug into a digital urbanization and rural infrastructure to make access of knowledge and skills ubiquitous through e-learning and m-learning;**
- **To open up telco sector to market competition to make access more affordable;**
- **Increase Internet stability and bandwidth to make 'internet4asean' a reality.**

9. Given that ASEAN economic integration cannot happen without women's participation (being the majority) in ICT as users, innovators, e-commerce practitioners and managers (technical and content)

We strongly urge all ASEAN member states, public and private institutions, individuals and communities to

- **Mobilize effective partnerships amongst public, private, grassroots and non-profit stakeholders to construct policies for more effective, efficient, and coordinated solutions;**
- **Create champions who provide facilities and jobs for vulnerable groups especially for people with disability (PWD) and the marginalized;**
- **Facilitate the growth of champions of women in work-life balance who want to increase access to knowledge and capabilities of the marginalized groups;**
- **Raise champions from among the Indigenous People, PWDs and marginalized groups; utilized current champions and their organizations to help build capacity in others to create even more champions to affect and touch the lives of many more millions in ASEAN**

10. Given the challenges of transportation, traffic jam, deterioration of air quality and other challenges in Megacities and crowded housing for urban poor and rural-urban migrants

We strongly urge all ASEAN member states, mayors' offices and municipalities, institutions, individuals and communities to

- **Incorporate creative and successful solutions to overcome environmental and traffic issues in urban planning and rejuvenation;**
- **Build capacity in municipal staff and provide performance incentives for their accountability to the tax payers so as to maintain and sustain healthy, clean and invigorating livable environment;**
- **Institutionalize and sustain healthy and clean environments for work-life balance for all urban dwellers;**
- **Provide marketing incentives and production assistance to corporate and non-profit entities to recycle and up-cycle all forms of wastes through innovative means which can also bring income-generation to the marginalized groups through social-entrepreneurship**

11. Given that impactful projects within ASEAN are available and can be easily customized for best practices and innovative projects

We call on ASEAN Foundation, international funders, government, philanthropists, funders to fund eHomemakers and its institutional partners to

- **Continue to advance the Work-Life Balance Movement with national level consultations and promotion of more wide-spread grassroots movement in-country**
- **Implement regional cooperation projects for marginalized women/girls which allow intra ASEAN tapping of resources from best practice case studies.**
- **Promote women to learn skills and acquire all knowledge in relation to work-life balance using distance learning, mobile learning, e-learning;**
- **Establish country hubs for a network of practitioners who can forge intra-ASEAN learnings through videos of best practices, teleconferencing between successful practitioners and would be practitioners, and site visits.**

12. In recognition of the increasing rate of teenage pregnancy within the ASEAN region, and the urgent need to develop young girls' talent for national development

We call on the ASEAN Foundation, ASEAN-member nations, institutions, individuals and communities to

- **Establish a network-based sex education curriculum for teenagers and parents through ICTs to prevent teenage pregnancy;**
- **Provide income generating projects as sources of livelihood especially for rural and indigenous girls to prevent arranged marriages and young girls who just arrive at puberty;**
- **Establish a women-led e-mechanism to monitor the occurrence of teenage pregnancy and to mentor teenage girls.**

"When work and life is one integrated whole, employees will have a life at work.

They will live to work rather than work to just to live. "