

What is the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025?

The estimated 90 million Southeast Asians with disabilities¹ encounter attitudinal, communication, environmental and institutional barriers as they take part in the lives of their communities. In December 2018, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) launched a new plan to integrate human rights of persons with disabilities into the ASEAN Community framework. The *ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the Enabling Masterplan)* a policy document that is aligned with the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and Sustainable Development Goals, builds on the region's commitments to create a barrier-free community.

Why does the Enabling Masterplan Matter to Civil Society?

According to the World Health Organization, about 60 percent of persons with disabilities are women. Persons with disabilities are members of every group in society. Women with disabilities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons with disabilities; and members of ethnic and religious minorities with disabilities should be integrated into civil society initiatives, and their networks can also be leveraged while conducting advocacy activities to expand the reach of civil society organizations (CSOs) on issues of interest to the CSOs.

The Enabling Masterplan's 76 priority action points cut across every sector – including political and economic life, society and culture, and the environment – corresponding with the ASEAN Vision 2025 Development Blueprints. The Blueprints aim to ensure that development reaches all ASEAN citizens.

CSOs working toward access to healthcare, education, political participation, and other issue areas can leverage ASEAN's commitment to these topic areas through the Enabling Masterplan. CSOs can work toward mitigating intersectional barriers to an inclusive society, which are faced by persons with multiple social identities. Recognizing the intersectionality of disability rights with the rights of other marginalized groups can lead to solutions that ensure better access to rights of all people. Persons with disabilities can also provide unique perspective based on their experiences and the barriers they encounter that add value to CSO programs and advocacy. Principles such as universal design, which is the idea that the design of a process or environment should be created free of barriers. This concept results in policies and programs that ensure marginalized persons have access to all initiatives.



Participants of AGENDA's November 2018 strategic communication and advocacy workshop in Jakarta develop plans to advocate for implementation of the Enabling Masterplan.

A New Advocacy Tool

Because the Enabling Masterplan builds on prior commitments of member states, such as the CRPD, it will be a critical document for generating strategic collaboration among ASEAN officials, national governments, and civil society. The Enabling Masterplan can be used to mobilize resources and create partnerships to amplify voices using a disability rights perspective.

¹ According to the World Health Organization, approximately 15 percent of the world's population has a disability.

How can CSOs use the Enabling Masterplan?

Disability rights can be used as an entry point for CSOs to discuss topic areas of interest with government officials at the national and regional levels. Although the Enabling Masterplan itself covers how persons with disabilities can be integrated into a variety of themes, the Enabling Masterplan can be used to approach government officials on issue areas. Since the Enabling Masterplan will be implemented both by ASEAN and by national governments, stakeholders are likely to be open to discussing the implementation of specific Enabling Masterplan action points. CSOs can provide technical assistance in their topic areas, such as rule of law and gender equality.



Stakeholders from across ASEAN engage in group work during the 2019 Regional Disability Rights Dialogue in Yangon

Expanding Networks through DPOs

Approaching government stakeholders with a disabled people's organization (DPO) partner may make them more inclined to meet on the Enabling Masterplan. The Enabling Masterplan explicitly calls for engagement of persons with disabilities and their organizations, and DPOs often work across sectors on multiple issues that affect persons with disabilities. For CSOs, DPOs can legitimize meetings on the Enabling Masterplan with government officials and provide their unique perspectives on how well the Enabling Masterplan is or is not integrating the disability rights community in a specific issue area.



Election administrators and disability rights advocates from Malaysia demonstrate their support to the Enabling Masterplan at the Fourth Regional Disability Rights Dialogue in Yangon, Myanmar

The General Election Network for Disability Access (AGENDA) partners can provide support to CSOs that are using the Enabling Masterplan in their advocacy. For more information, please contact AGENDA Program Manager Erni Andriani (eandriani@ifes.org). **ASEAN Disability Forum (ADF)** can provide support to CSOs working at the regional level. For more information, please contact ADF Chairman Puay Tiak Lim (puaytiaklim@yahoo.com.sg).

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