# Fifth South-East Asia Multi-Stakeholder Forum

# "Building Back Better from COVID-19 while Advancing the full Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"

## Session 2
## South-East Asian perspectives on the APFSD and HLPF theme 2022 "Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"

Tuesday, 28 September 2021; 14:00 – 16:00 hrs (Bangkok Time: UTC +7)
Virtual meeting, Zoom

### Overview

Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was already stalled in South-East Asia, and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis has further compromised their full achievement by 2030. While no country has been spared from the impacts of the pandemic, the degree of the impacts and their consequential damage on the SDG progress between countries has been asymmetric. The *Asia-Pacific SDG Partnership Report 2021: Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic – Leaving No Country Behind*, developed in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), identified such contrasting impacts due to the divergent pre-existing economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities in and response capacities of the countries and helped share an understanding of the underlying vulnerabilities and capacities of the countries in the Asia-Pacific Region.

When considering the existing divergence in resources and capacities across the South-East Asian countries, further discussion at the subregional- and country-level becomes crucial in fully understanding and identifying the unique needs, tools and operational frameworks necessary to ensure that no country is left behind throughout the recovery process from COVID-19 and beyond as called for by the 2022 HLPF theme "Building back better from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda."

In view of the impact that COVID-19 has had on the Asia-Pacific region, the 2022 Asia-Pacific SDG Partnership Report will examine how the region can increase its resilience through an inclusive and sustainable response to recover from the pandemic. In so doing, it will explore trajectories for resilient and inclusive recovery in social and environmental dimensions that can address inequalities in recovery pathways within and between countries, to accelerate sustainable development aligned with the SDGs, with specific emphasis on the goals under review at the 2022 HLPF: Goal 4 on quality education; Goal 5 on gender equality; Goal 14 on life below water; Goal 15 on life on land and Goal 17 on partnerships for the goals.

In this context, ADB, UNDP and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) are organizing a virtual policy dialogue to identify subregional challenges and development priorities, and brainstorm cooperation measures that will support the South-East subregion to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and continue progress toward achieving the SDGs. The discussion points of the virtual dialogue will feed into the thematic priorities of, and examples shared in the 2022 SDG Partnership Report.

## Objectives

- Identify the unique set of challenges and needs of South-East Asia and its subregions, and discuss concrete collaborations that could be developed with partners;
- Expand field of work to incorporate a subregional perspective within subregions to better support ESCAP member States; and
- Gather information on priorities policies, stakeholder-led initiatives and projects for possible inclusion in the 2022 SDG Partnership report that are related to the HLPF theme 2022 "Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" and the SDGs under review: Goal 4 on quality education; Goal 5 on gender equality; Goal 14 on life below water; Goal 15 on life on land and Goal 17 on partnerships for the goals.

## Target Audience

Participants will include official representatives from the subregion, various United Nations organizations, civil society representatives, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, the private sector representatives, and regional and international organizations.

## Further Information

This session will take place in a virtual modality on **28 September 2021**. It will be conducted in English. All questions regarding this session and the SDG Forum can be sent to escap-sro-sea@un.org.

## Tentative Programme

**Moderator:** Ms. Juliet Nicole Braslow, Economic Affairs Officer, Office of the Executive Secretary, UN ESCAP

**Presentation: Key messages and findings from 2021 SDG Partnership Report and Introduction to theme of 2022 SDG Partnership Report**

Mr. Bishwa Tiwari, Programme Specialist, UN Development Programme (UNDP)

Ms. Smita Nakhooda, Senior Results Management Specialist, Asian Development Bank (ADB)

**Panellists to frame the discussion (25 min)**

1. Expert on SDG 4: Ms. Ethel Agnes Pascua-Valenzuela, Director of Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO)
2. Expert on SDG 5: Ms. Cielito V. Perez, Executive Director of the Center for Women's Resources, Inc.
3. Expert on SDG 14: Ms. Fithriyyah Iskandar, Initiator of Seangle Indonesia Chapter Pontianak, Project Leader & Founder in Asia-Pacific Climate Project,
4. Expert on SDG 15: Ms. Riyanti Djalante, Head of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance Division of ASEAN Secretariat

**Moderator:** Mr. Oliver Paddison, Chief of Section for Countries in Special Situations, UN ESCAP

**Instructions for Breakout rooms (2 min)** *(to be organized by issue areas: education, gender equality, life below water, and life on land. Participants will select their breakout room)*

*(Allow transition time into breakout rooms **3 minutes**)*

**Breakout rooms (50 min)** *(Resident Coordinators and representatives will host, begin the discussion and collect impressions to reflect in plenary, co-hosts from the Asia-Pacific SDG Partnership will guide the discussion, note-taker/support from ESCAP accompanies each breakout room)*

| Breakout Room | SDG 4 Education | SDG 5 Gender | SDG 14 Life below water | SDG 15 Life on land |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Host: Resident Coordinator's Office | Cambodia: Pauline Fatima Tamesis, Resident Coordinator | Thailand: Iwona Spytkowski, Team Leader and Strategic Planner, Resident Coordinator's Office | Indonesia: Afke Bootsman, Head of Resident Coordinator's Office | Lao People's Democratic Republic: Sara Sekkenes Tollefsen, Resident Coordinator |
| Co-host: SDG Partnership | Frank Thomas, ADB | Smita Nakhooda, ADB | Riccardo Mesiano, ESCAP | Bishwa Tiwari, UNDP |

**Guiding questions to gather input for 2022 SDG Partnership Report**

- How has COVID-19 affected quality education, gender equality, and biodiversity (marine and terrestrial) conservation?
- How are the above effects of COVID-19 and recovery measures different for groups within countries and between countries?

- Where are you seeing emerging possibilities, initiatives and priorities to invest in these goal areas to enable a more sustainable recovery? How have these issues been included or mainstreamed in the COVID-19 recovery measures of your government and institutions?

*(Breakout rooms will close and all participants will automatically re-join the main room after 50 minutes of discussion)*

**<u>Plenary (20 min)</u>**

**Resident Coordinators reflect on discussion and key messages from break out rooms (*5 minutes per SDG*)**

- *SDG 4: Pauline Fatima Tamesis, Resident Coordinator Cambodia*
- *SDG 5: Iwona Spytkowski, Team Leader and Strategic Planner, Resident Coordinator's Office Thailand*
- *SDG 14: Afke Bootsman, Head of Resident Coordinator's Office Indonesia*
- *SDG 15: Sara Sekkenes Tollefsen, Resident Coordinator Lao People's Democratic Republic*

**<u>Closing by Moderator</u> (5 min)**