



International
Labour
Organization



UK Government

Skills for Prosperity in Southeast Asia Programme (SfP-SEA)

July / 2020

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▶ At a glance



Duration

November 2019 –
March 2023



Donor

The United Kingdom
Government



Target beneficiaries

Youth, women and
vulnerable populations.



Geographical coverage

Southeast Asia, with
targeted activities and pilot
projects implemented in
Malaysia, Indonesia and
the Philippines

▶ Background

With their rapid economic development in the last two decades, three middle-income Southeast Asian countries—Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines—have great potential for higher and more equitable growth. However, a lack of higher-skilled workforces to drive productivity and innovation in these countries stands as a key barrier to increased prosperity and reduced poverty.

Skills development and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) can bridge this gap. But while employers struggle to find workers with a right set of skills, there is a mismatch between what they are looking for and what job seekers have acquired from the skills development and TVET systems. A lack of relevant and demand-driven skills among TVET graduates have forced them to take low-paid jobs or work in fields irrelevant to their academic credentials. Many have remained jobless.

The scarcity of professional skills is also common among women and vulnerable populations who have already endured a lack of access to TVET and subsequently the labour market.

This trend, in fact, offers an opportunity for TVET and Higher Education (HE) reform in a way that will eventually help youth become future-ready for job markets of the fourth industrial revolution as well as unlock the full employment potential of women and vulnerable populations. Thus, the Skills for Prosperity in Southeast Asia programme (SfP-SEA) assists governments, employers' and workers' organisations in the three countries to achieve this change.

As 178 million youth around the world are employed in sectors hit hard by the COVID-19 crisis and are facing layoffs and severe loss in incomes, the SfP-SEA will work with national partners to develop activities to assist those suffering the economic fallout of the pandemic.

► Objectives

The programme aims to contribute to increasing national capacity to achieve sustained and inclusive growth through the enhancement of skills development and TVET systems in Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines.

To achieve this, the programme works with government agencies, employers' organisations, trade unions, educational institutions and other partners in Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines to facilitate review and reform of the countries' skills development and TVET system strategies and policies. In the region, the SfP-SEA provides opportunities for mutual learning among the three countries and the other ASEAN nations, and beyond—not only showcasing the results of the pilots and lessons learned from the programme but also facilitating the sharing of best practices in the region and other parts of the world.

Expected results of the SfP-SEA:

- **Increased equity** in access to TVET, male-dominated job markets and entrepreneurship opportunities for women and vulnerable populations through changes to skills development and TVET/HE system programmes and policies.
- **Improved quality** of skills development and TVET systems through upgrading curriculums and occupational competency standards, capacity development of instructors, promotion of lifelong learning, and improvement in labour market data collection and analysis.
- **Improved relevance** of skills development and TVET systems through industry-led learning models including the establishment of sector-specific skills councils and the adoption of apprenticeship programmes by relevant industries.
- **Improved cost-effectiveness** of skills development and TVET systems through facilitation of multi-stakeholder co-financing of the systems, integration of fragmented and redundant roles of several government agencies in charge of TVET, and reorientation of financing to meet the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.



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- **Increased awareness and understanding** among regional and global constituents and partners of the needs for skills development and TVET systems reform and inclusive growth in the context of post COVID-19 and on-going global transformations.

With these projected results, the SfP-SEA aims for systematic and long-term change that would facilitate efforts by Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines to achieve shared prosperity. This means TVET graduates will not only become employable but also earn higher wages. Industry will be upgraded and transformed which will increase business competitiveness. Improved curricula will bring about better pedagogy and leadership which will lead to improvement in learning outcomes in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Ultimately, these benefits will pave the way for increased and inclusive economic growth in the three countries.

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