



The Big Idea 2

Reskilling and Upskilling the ASEAN Workforce

The ASEAN ^{shift} to Lifelong Learning



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International
Labour
Organization





In this session...

- ▶ **The factors driving change in employment in ASEAN**
- ▶ **What this means for skills systems in ASEAN Member States**
- ▶ **ASEAN's shift toward Lifelong Learning with examples of good practice from the region**

ASEAN Profile

- ▶ Population of 670 million
- ▶ Combined GDP \$3.8 trillion USD
- ▶ Productive workforce of over 400 million
- ▶ 5.2 million young people entering labour force every year.



Drivers of Change in ASEAN Employment Landscape



Climate change

**Climate and
Environment**



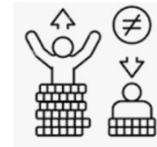
Demographic
change

Demographics



Digitalization

Technology



Inequality



Globalization

**Global Supply
Chains**

Drivers of Change in ASEAN Employment Landscape



Climate change

Climate and Environment

Trends

- ▶ Increasing regulation
- ▶ Extreme weather events
- ▶ Some sectors vulnerable to climate risks
- ▶ Risks of decline in some sectors, new skills and jobs emerging across many sectors

Drivers of Change in ASEAN Employment Landscape

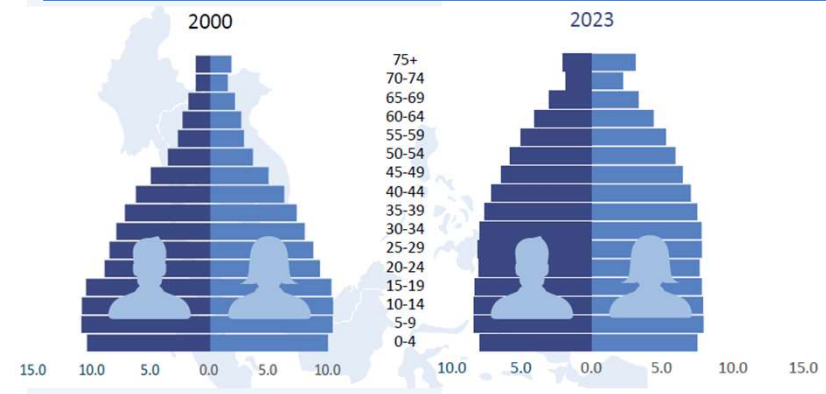


Demographics

Trends

- ▶ ASEAN is now an aging population
- ▶ Old-age dependency ratio projected to double by 2050
- ▶ Workers need to increase productivity to maintain standards of living
- ▶ Focus on mid-career and older workers upskilling
- ▶ Shortages in care work
- ▶ Skills migration

Demographic pyramid 2000 and 2023



Drivers of Change in ASEAN Employment Landscape



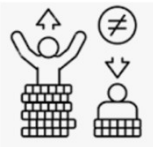
Digitalization

Technology

Trends

- ▶ Digitisation, automation, robotics, AI
- ▶ New business models, ecommerce, platform economy
- ▶ Significant growth opportunities for innovators and early adopters of technology

Drivers of Change in ASEAN Employment Landscape

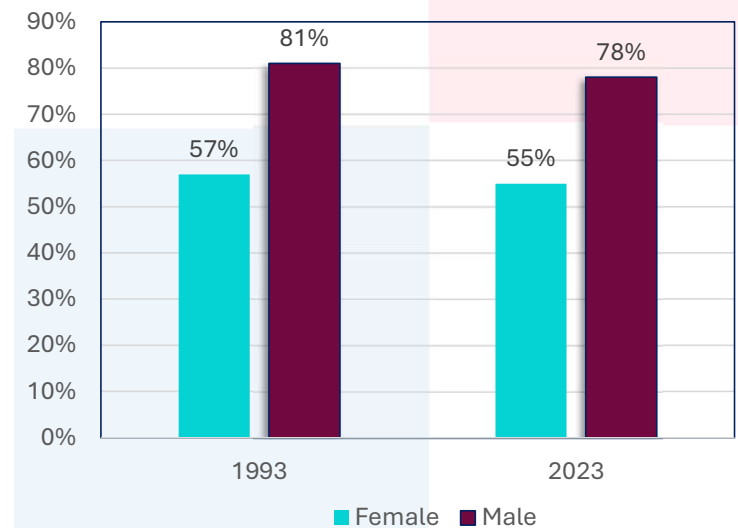


Inequality

Trends

- ▶ ASEAN has seen rapid income growth, however
- ▶ 1 in 6 workers in working poverty
- ▶ 7 in 10 workers in informal employment
- ▶ Little improvement in gender participation ratios
- ▶ Underrepresented groups include people with disabilities, rural populations, ethnic minorities

Labour Force Participation by gender, 1993 and 2023



Drivers of Change in ASEAN Employment Landscape



Global Supply Chains

Trends

- ▶ 75 million Global Supply Chain-related jobs in 2021*
- ▶ Key opportunities for sectors and workers to move up global value chains
- ▶ Exposure to global price fluctuations, geopolitical dynamics, quality/ESG regulations
- ▶ Potential for rapid growth in some sectors, but risk of worker displacement in others



What does this mean for Skills Systems in ASEAN?



Shift to a lifelong learning approach

Pro-active, regular upgrading of standards, curriculum, equipment and teacher training

Identify and anticipate emerging sectors, skills and regulations - UPSKILLING

Identify vulnerable jobs and declining sectors – RESKILLING, RETRAINING



What does this mean for Skills Suppliers in ASEAN?



Increased focus on rapid design and delivery of targeted outcome-driven training

New delivery models and markets through digital channels and AI powered teaching and learning

Greater need to attract and cater to mid-career / older workers

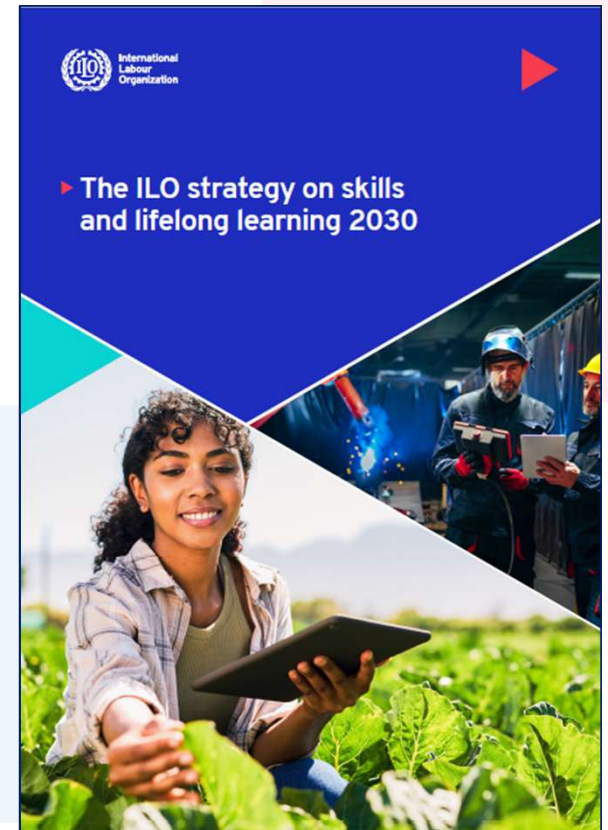
Greater need to engage and attract underrepresented groups and those currently outside of the labour market

ILO Strategy on Skills and Lifelong Learning

- ▶ Following consultations with constituents, ILO published its Strategy on Skills and Lifelong Learning in 2023

Five pillars

- ▶ Improved policies, governance and financing
- ▶ Strengthened skills needs intelligence
- ▶ Innovative and flexible learning programmes and pathways
- ▶ Inclusive skills programmes for diverse needs of labour markets
- ▶ Quality apprenticeships and work-based learning promoted



1. Improved policies, governance and financing

Examples

- ▶ **Indonesia: Presidential Regulation 68 / 2022 on the Revitalization of TVET** introduced a range of measures to transition toward a 'demand-led TVET system.
- ▶ **Singapore: SkillsFuture Level Up Programme.** Individuals over 40 received a Mid Career Credit of \$4000, that can be spent on approved courses.
- ▶ **Malaysia: HRD Corp's sustainable skills financing.** Since PSMB Act 2001, employers contribute 1% or 0.5% of their monthly payroll budget to a levy. This has now funded 24.5 million training places.



2. Strengthened Skills Needs Intelligence

Examples

- ▶ **Singapore: Ministry of Trade and Industry established the Future Economy Council in 2017, which supports regular publication of Industry Transformation Maps across 7 economic clusters**
- ▶ **Thailand's National Statistical Office has included a skills development module to their quarterly labour force survey since 2016, This links training data with employment outcomes and allows researchers to track participants progress and the impact of skills development on employment.**
- ▶ **Viet Nam: ILO supported the Viet Nam Textile and Apparel Association (VITAS) and tripartite constituents to conduct a detailed skills foresight analysis for decent work and productivity in the Garment Sector**



3. Innovative and flexible learning pathways

Examples

- ▶ **Cambodia: Target to upskill 1.5 million individuals** by 2030. As of April 2025, more than 110,000 individuals had enrolled including 40,000 from poor or vulnerable households.
- ▶ An ILO project supported **Thailand's Automotive Human Resource Development Academy (AHRDA)** to conduct an employer survey that clearly identified technical skills needs for Programme Logic Controller (PLC) and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA). In response, a 10 day course was developed and 100 individuals were trained within two months.



4. Inclusive skills programmes for diverse needs of labour markets

Examples

- ▶ **Lao PDR:** the ILO supported a **pilot capacity building for the Mutual Recognition of Skills (MRS) for Bricklayers and Plasterers** through a Bilateral Recognition Arrangement between Thailand and Lao PDR.
- ▶ **Philippines:** To address the **gender imbalance in ICT**, JP Morgan, ILO and TESDA collaborated with training providers and industry to provide a **scholarship pathway to entry-level ICT jobs** for young women and girls. The **#WomenCanDolt** scholarship scheme supported more than 300 women to graduate.
- ▶ **Capacity building work in Myanmar** is supporting youth to develop **technical and core skills relating to earthquake recovery labour market needs** such as electrical wiring and solar panel installation.



5. Quality Apprenticeships and work-based learning promoted

Examples

- ▶ This year, TESDA in the Philippines introduced the **Enterprise-Based Education and Training (EBET Act)**. EBET graduates to date have more than an 85% employment rate, so this will now scale the framework at a national level.
- ▶ ILO is currently supporting tripartite stakeholders in **Philippines and Thailand to drive green and digital skills in the construction sector by strengthened apprenticeship programmes**, based on ILO Recommendation 208 on Quality Apprenticeships





Key takeaways:



01.

Shift towards Lifelong Learning in ASEAN



02.

Skills system must be able to identify, anticipate and respond to skills demands, opportunities and risks at pace



03.

Shared sense of ownership, and investment between governments, industry, training providers and individuals



04.

Potential for transformational gains by engaging underrepresented groups in employable skills

Final thought



Skills development is a crucial component for achieving social justice.

Effective and inclusive skills and lifelong learning systems are a key enabler of human development and decent work for all.

Gilbert F. Hounou, ILO Director General



Thank you for listening