

## **The 16th ASEAN and Japan High Level Officials Meeting on Caring Societies, December 5 - 7, 2018 Recommendations**

We, the participants representing the health, social welfare and labour sectors of the ASEAN Plus Three Countries, along with international, regional and related organisations and partners, at the 16th ASEAN and Japan High Level Officials Meeting on Caring Societies (hereafter referred to as the Meeting) held in Yokohama, Japan on December 5 - 7, 2018, under the theme, “Promoting an Inclusive Society Through the Eradication of Poverty and Empowerment of Children and Youth”;

Appreciating the continued initiative taken by the Government of Japan to hold these annual Meetings since 2003, and acknowledging that this 16th Meeting has served as an effective platform to share knowledge and exchange views about roles of stakeholders in health, social welfare and labour sectors to promote an inclusive society towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030;

Recognising the critical importance of our investment to realize a society in which children and youth can grow up with dream, hope and respect, including for ending child labour in all its forms;

Reaffirming that the eradication of poverty and the empowerment of children and youth, regardless of their social and economic status, is an important foundation to realise a sustainable, equitable society for our future generations;

Acknowledging that poverty among children and youth results from multidimensional issues and relates to their social and economic environment, and stressing the need for a holistic, multi-sectoral approach to break the cycle of poverty for future generations;

Emphasising the need for further collaboration among all relevant sectors in central and local governments, including maternal and child health, child welfare, childcare, employment, education, as well as private sectors including NGOs and volunteers, to provide necessary social services and support for children and youth at all stages of their lives, from birth, childhood, adolescence, towards social and economic independence,

Agreed the following recommendations:

1. Develop and strengthen social protection framework to support and empower children and youth at all stages and dimensions of their lives towards social and economic independence, with a particular focus on those vulnerable in society, in particular rural areas, including measures to increase education and employment prospects and opportunities for vulnerable families to ensure their equal access to decent work and the continuation of incomes;
2. Enhance cooperation and coordination across health, welfare, education, employment, rural development and other related sectors in order to ensure seamless support and continuum of care at all stages of child and youth development, from birth, childhood, adolescence, towards social and economic independence;
3. Promote capacity building of and collaboration among health, childcare and social workers to address multi-dimensional issues affecting children and youth with disabilities, in order to enable them to identify gaps and strength, and help improve the quality of life of those children and youths towards social and economic independence;
4. Promote investment in early childhood care, development and education (ECCDE), including targeted support to vulnerable groups where necessary, through a comprehensive approach involving maternal, new born and child health, nutrition, responsive caregiving and early learning and stimulation;
5. Engage and strengthen collaboration with the private sector and NGOs in community-based support programmes to provide seamless livelihood, educational and employment assistance to children, youth and their families at varying stages of social and economic development;
6. Strengthen collection and sharing of disaggregated data on child poverty by responsible authorities at the national and local levels to monitor and evaluate the outcomes and effectiveness of targeted social protection schemes for the poor and needy;
7. Promote the use of technology to support effectiveness and coverage of

healthcare, childcare, employment services and other social protection programmes especially to vulnerable groups, encouraging Japan to consider sharing its technologies and best practices that will support ASEAN Member States in promoting digital-based delivery services towards inclusive social protection programmes;

8. Enhance sharing of knowledge, experiences, good practices and social innovations across and within countries in the areas of public health, social welfare and education for children and youth, as well as employment of the youth and their families by facilitating cross-sectoral and cross-organisational collaboration among the ASEAN Member States and Plus Three Countries, WHO, ILO, UNICEF, JICA and other related international and regional organisations and partners;

Further agreed that:

The proceedings and outcomes of this 16th Meeting should be reported to the respective Ministers and other Senior Officials in each country for appropriate actions to implement the above recommendations in accordance with their respective national process and contexts; and

Japan, with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat, should report the proceedings and outcomes of this meeting to the ASEAN+3 Health Ministers and Senior Officials Meetings on Health Development (AHMM+3, SOMHD+3), ASEAN+3 Ministers and Senior Officials Meetings on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD+3, SOMSWD+3) and ASEAN+3 Labour Ministers and Senior Officials Meetings (ALMM+3, SLOM+3) as well as ASEAN+3 Senior Officials Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (SOMRDPE+3).

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