

# ASEAN Youth Economic Forum

## April 4-5, 2024, Vientiane, Laos PDR

### Final Report

#### I. Report Summary

The ASEAN Youth Economic Forum (AYEF) 2024, co-organized by the ASEAN Youth Organization and the Mekong Institute (MI), focused on intensifying engagement among key players in the agricultural value chain. By collaborating with MI, the Forum aimed to deepen regional cooperation and integration to accelerate sustainable socioeconomic development and poverty alleviation in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS). AYEF aligned with frameworks such as the GMS Cooperation Program Strategic Framework 2030, ASEAN Economic Community, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, underscored the Forum's commitment to addressing pressing challenges.

AYEF 2024 provided a vital platform for addressing prevalent issues of food insecurity and sustainable agriculture, particularly in equipping youth with the tools to address these challenges effectively. The Forum served as a catalyst for raising awareness and involvement of youth in food security, contributing to addressing multifaceted challenges in the global food system. By bringing together stakeholders from ASEAN, Japan, and the Mekong Institute, the Forum fostered interactive learning experiences, enhancing engagement and collaboration.

The 2 days program welcomed 30 delegates from ASEAN and Japan countries and participated in a total of 510 participants with different backgrounds. Discussions centered on understanding food security, barriers, solutions, Asian-Japan collaboration, and youth voices. The second day, reserved for delegates and speakers, featured a talk show and focused group discussions. Additionally, a learning visit to Cofarm provided hands-on insights into sustainable agriculture practices. Overall, AYEF 2024 facilitated meaningful dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collaboration, paving the way for collective action towards a more sustainable and inclusive future

## II. Program

### 1. Public Forum - April 4, 2024 - Vientiane Laos PDR

The public forum is attended by high-ranking officials and Ambassadors: H.E Kenichi Kobayashi, the Ambassador of Japan to Laos PDR; H.E Morakot Sriswasdi, the Ambassador of Thailand to Laos PDR; Mr. Achmad Dahlan, Minister Counsellor of Embassy of Indonesia in Laos PDR, H.E Deena Amatong, the Philippine Ambassador in Laos PDR. It is also being mainstreamed online and attended by around 176 different key stakeholders from the ASEAN region onsite and around 313 virtually.

#### 1.1. Opening Session: Fostering Food Security and Economic Growth Between ASEAN and Japan

The inaugural session of the conference commenced with a resounding call for strengthened collaboration and trust between ASEAN and Japan, echoing the milestone 50-year anniversary of their esteemed relationship in 2023. Under the auspices of **H.E. Kenichi Kobayashi, Ambassador of Japan to Laos PDR**, the session underscored a shared commitment to fostering food security and driving economic growth across the region.

Ambassador Kobayashi articulated a vision centered on the pivotal role of ASEAN youth in shaping the trajectory of cooperation. Against a backdrop of rapid but uneven economic expansion, compounded by challenges ranging from natural disasters to post-COVID recovery, the imperative of fortifying food security amidst population growth and climate change risks was unmistakable. Initiatives like the ASEAN+3 emergency rice reserve and the ASEAN FS Info System exemplified collaborative endeavors aimed at bolstering resilience and knowledge sharing.

**Mr. Bouachanh Sihavong, Director of State Enterprise for Agricultural Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Lao PDR**, reiterated the foundational significance of food security, transcending mere sustenance to encompass broader dimensions of physical, mental, socio-cultural, and economic well-being. Emphasizing Lao's commitment to policies promoting food security, good nutrition, and sustainable agro-ecosystems, he stressed the imperative of regional and global partnerships to address emerging challenges.

**Mr. Yukio Kamiya, Director of ASEAN Bilateral Relations, METI Japan**, delineated a strategic roadmap for future cooperation, accentuating the need to foster forward-looking industries, accelerate decarbonization efforts, and cultivate human resources by creating co-creation projects to address socio-economics challenges of

partner countries in the Global South with a special emphasis on youth engagement. Recognizing youth as indispensable agents of change, Mr. Kamiya underscored the importance of nurturing shared understanding and cooperation to drive sustainable agriculture and economic development.

**Dr. Roger Chao Jr., Assistant Director of Youth, Education, and Sport Division, ASEAN Secretariat,** echoed sentiments of solidarity and mutual support, affirming the pivotal role of youth in enhancing connectivity and resilience. Emphasizing the imperative of capacity building, increased youth participation in policy formulation, and empowerment, Dr. Chao highlighted the multifaceted nature of sustainable agriculture and the imperative of collaborative solutions to global challenges.

**Mr. Ryosuke Fujioka, Chief Representative of AMEICC Secretariat,** elucidated the pivotal role of AMEICC as a catalyst for co-creation between ASEAN and Japan, facilitating research, events, and tangible projects aimed at fostering innovation. Recognizing the ASEAN Youth Entrepreneurship Forum (AYEF) as a conduit for connecting youth from both regions, Mr. Fujioka underscored its potential to engender transformative dialogues and forge enduring networks.

**Mr. Senjaya Mulia, Founder of ASEAN Youth Organization,** concluded the session with a call to action, urging active engagement and collaboration among youth. Recognizing the diversity of ASEAN as a source of strength, Mr. Mulia emphasized the imperative of collective action in advancing sustainable agriculture and food security across the region.

In summary, the opening session served as a poignant reminder of the shared aspirations and commitments binding ASEAN and Japan in their quest for a more resilient, prosperous, and inclusive future.

Following the opening remarks, the program commenced with an inaugural ceremony, during which representatives from the ASEAN Youth Organization, Mekong Institute, and AMEICC-METI guided the symbolic act of watering seeds to symbolize hope, prosperity and togetherness for ASEAN-Japan cooperation in food security and agriculture sector.

## **1.2. Session 1: Understanding Food Security and Building Resilience: A Perspective on Grassroots, Policy, and Collaboration.**

The inaugural session provided a nuanced exploration of food security and resilience, incorporating insights from grassroots initiatives, policy frameworks, and collaborative efforts, delivered by distinguished speakers representing various organizations.

**Ms. Kyung-Mee Kim, FAO Representative to Lao PDR**, commenced the session by reiterating FAO's overarching mandate to eliminate hunger and ensure food accessibility globally. Despite concerted efforts, she highlighted the persistent challenge of food insecurity, with 9.2% of the global population enduring undernourishment. Ms. Kim emphasized the critical role of young farmers in agricultural sustainability, elucidating challenges such as limited land access and financial exclusion, necessitating integrated policies and institutional support.

**Mr. Hiyoyuki Yamaguchi, Councillor/Deputy Director-General of the Export and International Affairs Bureau at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries of Japan**, provided insights into the global challenges facing agriculture and food systems. He outlined Japan's comprehensive Midori plan, emphasizing its holistic approach to food security encompassing economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Mr. Yamaguchi stressed the importance of tailored approaches to sustainable agriculture within the ASEAN context, leveraging Japan's technological expertise and knowledge-sharing initiatives.

**Mr. Soubandith Lattanavong, Officer of the Department of Treaty and Law at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Laos**, delved into regional and international diplomatic engagements, advocating for inclusive agricultural development and policy alignment. He emphasized the significance of grassroots participation in policy formulation and underscored the importance of community-based approaches to empower local stakeholders and integrate traditional knowledge into legal frameworks.

During the Q&A session, speakers addressed pertinent issues such as gender equity in agriculture and the nexus between grassroots engagement and government policies. Ms. Kim and Mr. Lattanavong highlighted the complementary roles of global policymakers and grassroots actors, advocating for inclusive dialogue and community-based approaches to bridge the gap between policy formulation and implementation.

In summary, Session 1 served as a platform for comprehensive discourse on food security and resilience, emphasizing the imperative of collaboration, innovation, and inclusive governance to address the multifaceted challenges confronting agriculture in the ASEAN region and beyond.

At the end of the session, a ceremonial gesture of appreciation was extended to the speakers in the form of token awards. These awards served as a tangible expression of gratitude for their valuable contributions and insights shared during the discussions. This act not only honored the speakers for their expertise and participation but also highlighted the importance of their contributions in advancing the objectives of the forum.

### 1.3. Session 2: Diagnosing the Roots: Causes and Effects of Food Insecurity

The second session delved into the underlying causes and far-reaching effects of food insecurity, offering insights from experts representing diverse sectors.

**Mr. Phouthasinh Phimm, Executive Director of Laos Farmers Network**, provided a comprehensive overview of the evolving agricultural landscape in rural communities. He highlighted the significant reliance on forest resources for food security and income generation, juxtaposed against the shift towards commercialized agriculture dominated by large-scale monoculture crops. Mr. Phimm delineated the adverse impacts of this transition, including land degradation, decreased fertility, and ecological imbalance. Recommending a shift towards regenerative farming practices, he underscored the need for financial incentives and increased demand for environmentally friendly products within the ASEAN community.

**Ms. Sekar Banjaran Aji, Forest Campaigner at Greenpeace South-East Asia - Indonesia**, shed light on the disproportionate impact of climate change on vulnerable communities within the ASEAN region. He emphasized the role of climate change as a primary driver of global hunger, exacerbating economic disparities and environmental degradation. Drawing from a case study in West Papua, Mr. Aji underscored the potential of local food diversity in addressing food insecurity while preserving cultural traditions and ecological balance. He advocated for the recognition and support of indigenous peoples as custodians of sustainable food systems and climate resilience.

**Ms. Le Thanh Hao, Project Manager at Glass Egg - A Virtuous Studio**, elucidated the multifaceted dimensions of food security, encompassing availability, access, utilization, and stability. He highlighted challenges such as market specialization, knowledge gaps among smallholder farmers, and vulnerability to global price fluctuations. Mr. Hao proposed solutions including crop diversification, increased understanding of global trade regulations, and integration into global value chains to enhance food security and resilience.

In conclusion, Session 2 provided a nuanced examination of the root causes and consequences of food insecurity, underscoring the imperative of sustainable agricultural practices, community empowerment, and policy interventions to address the complex challenges facing the ASEAN region.

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#### **1.4. Session 3 Nurturing Solutions: Agripreneurship, Technology and Innovation**

**Mr. Bounthong Bouahom, President of Lao Rubber Association,** the Capital Development for Agriculture Innovation Systems (CDAIS), emphasized the critical role of agri-entrepreneurship in ensuring food security. He defined it as the ability to develop, organize, and run agricultural enterprises successfully and sustainably. He highlighted the importance of bridging institutions to promote agricultural innovations, focusing on contextual agreements and arrangements. He outlined five key principles of sustainable agriculture and highlighted ASEAN's commitment to translate the ASEAN Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Agriculture and Inclusive Rural Development (ASEAN-RAI) into national-level policies and actions. Bouahom stressed the importance of integrating technology and innovation into sustainable agricultural practices, emphasizing connectivity in physical, institutional, and human dimensions among ASEAN youth agripreneurs.

**Mr. Noto Suoneto, ASEAN Business Advisory Council, Foreign Policy Analyst,** positioned ASEAN as the epicenter of global growth, emphasizing the region's rapid urbanization and increased demand for food. Despite advances in agricultural productivity through the Green Revolution, Suoneto highlighted challenges posed by rapid urbanization, industrialization, and land use change, leading to decreased arable land availability and rising food costs. He emphasized the role of the private sector and young entrepreneurs in promoting sustainable food production and certification. Suoneto advocated for local, organic, and sustainable farming practices, reduction of food waste, and clear food labeling and certification standards. He showcased solutions such as advocacy for sustainable farming practices, mindful consumption, and marketing sustainable products effectively to reach broader markets, citing examples like river weed from Luang Prabang.

**Mr. Venkatachalam Anbumozhi, Director of Research Strategy and Innovation of ERIA** underscored the importance of sustainability at farm, national, and global levels, particularly in relation to climate change. He highlighted financing options as crucial for sustainable agriculture, emphasizing the significance of carbon markets in addressing climate change impacts. Anbumozhi outlined the impacts of climate change on health, water, and agricultural sectors in ASEAN, stressing the high greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the agriculture sector but also its potential for GHG mitigation. He discussed carbon farming as a means to achieve social benefits, increased productivity, and co-benefits for farmers and communities. Anbumozhi presented challenges in current mechanisms for carbon markets, emphasizing the

need to harness the market potential of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). He highlighted initiatives like the GIZ-Althelis CSR Fund to support sustainable agricultural practices and preserve natural resources. Anbumozhi concluded by advocating for exploring opportunities and costs in carbon markets and CO2 finance to address climate actions and deliver developmental co-benefits, bridging the gap between large institutional investors and small-scale agriculture.

During the Q&A, Adib Azizan raised concerns about the presence of middlemen in the agriculture industry, highlighting the issue of farmers receiving minimal profits while consumers pay high prices. He emphasized the need to find solutions to this problem to ensure fair compensation for farmers and reasonable prices for consumers.

Answered by Mr. Noto Suoneto, ASEAN Business Advisory Council, Foreign Policy Analyst, Suoneto acknowledged the inevitable existence of middlemen but emphasized the importance of finding a balance to avoid disruption in the business cycle. He suggested understanding the economics and business rationale of sustainable food production, categorizing consumers into low, middle, and high-income groups. Suoneto proposed targeting the middle-income group due to its significant size in the consumer market. He highlighted the role of the digital economy in promoting sustainable food production, emphasizing the concept of an inclusive closed food model.

The panel discussion addressed the complex issue of middlemen in the agriculture industry, exploring strategies to minimize their negative impact on farmers and consumers. The insights provided by the panelists underscored the importance of organizational empowerment for farmers, while also highlighting the potential of digital solutions and inclusive business models in promoting sustainability and fairness in the agriculture value chain.

At the end of the session, a ceremonial gesture of appreciation was extended to the speakers in the form of token awards. These awards served as a tangible expression of gratitude for their valuable contributions and insights shared during the discussions. This act not only honored the speakers for their expertise and participation but also highlighted the importance of their contributions in advancing the objectives of the forum.

#### **1.5. Session 4: ASEAN-Japan Initiatives and Collaborative Pathways**

**Ms Nikka Ignacio, Youth Coordinator of Asian Farmers Association** highlighted the imperative for collaboration on sustainable agriculture and food security (FS) programs, emphasizing that FS is a complex global issue that transcends national borders. She stressed the importance of pooling resources, expertise, and technology

due to limited resources. She emphasized knowledge sharing for informed decision-making, capacity building, and innovation to enhance productivity, sustainability, and resilience. She advocated for promoting and protecting the rights and dignity of women, men, and young farmers. She discussed the partnership between SAGRI-AFA and ongoing collaborations leveraging AI and space tech to address farmers' challenges, such as soil efficiency and crop management. She emphasized data-driven decision-making and the incorporation of youth into executive boards, highlighting the replication and tailoring of technologies to local contexts to create new value chains.

**Mr. Hiroyuki Yanagida, General Manager, Overseas Department of Tromso,** discussed the utilization of rice husk briquettes as a carbon-neutral energy source, emphasizing its potential for increasing yield, decreasing chemical fertilizer usage, and combating climate change. He outlined Tromso's method, focusing on biochar production equipment, knowledge dissemination, and research activities. Yanagida highlighted the importance of partnerships and innovative approaches in promoting sustainable agriculture.

**Mr. Suebsit Sarntisart, Director of Global Business Synergy,** provided insights into agriculture in Thailand, noting the sector's significant contribution to the economy despite challenges such as an aging workforce and low yields per acre. He discussed government support programs, including loans and initiatives to boost agri-product processing. Sarntisart highlighted digital infrastructure development and partnerships with neighboring countries to invest in agritech startups. He emphasized the importance of embracing new technologies to address existing challenges and seize new opportunities.

**Mr. Ryoya Tasai of the World Food Program,** discussed smallholder farmer support initiatives in Laos, focusing on activities to increase income levels, promote nutrition, and address climate change. He outlined a case study on co-creating food security for farmers, emphasizing capacity building, business opportunities, and nutrition awareness. Tasai highlighted challenges such as limited knowledge and climate change impacts, emphasizing private sector collaboration and carbon sequestration through agroforestry approaches.

During the Q&A session, an inquiry was made about initiatives for young farmers to maintain their products and access technology. Ignacio highlighted exchange programs and paid internships for ASEAN farmers to learn practices from Japan. He emphasized the need for policies supporting and protecting young farmers and their involvement not only in farming but also in technology and marketing.

The presentations and discussions underscored the importance of collaboration, innovation, and capacity building in addressing challenges and promoting sustainable



agriculture and food security in the ASEAN region. Through partnerships and the adoption of new technologies, stakeholders can work towards enhancing productivity, resilience, and inclusivity in the agricultural sector.

At the end of the session, a ceremonial gesture of appreciation was extended to the speakers in the form of token awards. These awards served as a tangible expression of gratitude for their valuable contributions and insights shared during the discussions. This act not only honored the speakers for their expertise and participation but also highlighted the importance of their contributions in advancing the objectives of the forum.

### **1.6. Session 5: Youth-Led Organizations Showcasing Initiatives & Best Practices for Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture**

**Mr. Thongdam Phongphicith of SAEDA Laos** highlighted the significance of agriculture in Laos, with 80% of the population engaged in small-scale farming and a majority residing in rural areas. He emphasized the importance of exposing young farmers to best practices in agriculture to ensure the continuity of farming. Phongphicith discussed the transition towards sustainable agriculture and food systems, outlining 10 elements and 13 principles of agroecology. He stressed practical applications across various levels, including technical, landscape, markets, organizations, and food systems. Phongphicith proposed five main interventions focusing on socio-cultural, environmentally friendly, economic, human health, and policy contributions.

**Mr. Akhteruzzaman Sano of Save the Earth Cambodia**, emphasized the need for appropriate resource utilization to avert a crisis, highlighting the importance of policy architectures and institutions integrating youth for sustainable environmental management. He advocated for continuous engagement and platforms for youth to contribute to ASEAN development, emphasizing the transformative impact of diverse actors working together. Sano underscored the importance of Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Learning (MERL) to evaluate progress and track development stages effectively.

**Ms. Phimmaly Thammavong of Global Green Growth Institute**, addressed crisis mitigation through public documents such as the National Adaptation Plan and Nationally Determined Contributions. He highlighted the lack of youth engagement in policy-making processes and presented a pilot project actively involving youth in decision-making. Thammavong emphasized collaboration with governments as representatives of women and youth.

**Mr. Kazuki Sakamoto, Head of ASEAN Business of Sagri**, proposed tackling challenges in the private sector using technology, particularly satellite data and AI. He

outlined initiatives to generate carbon credits from farmland using AI data for soil analysis, CO<sub>2</sub>, nitrogen, and pH levels optimization. Sakamoto emphasized revenue sharing with local partners and ongoing projects across ASEAN countries.

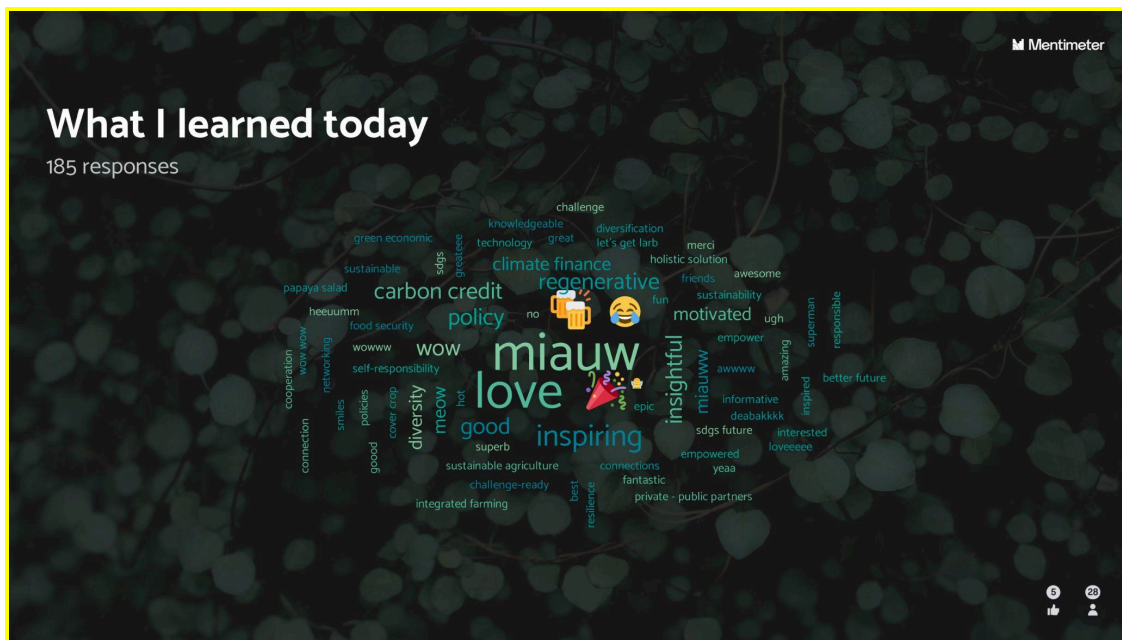
During the Q&A session, speakers addressed questions on farmer organizations' roles, AI technology utilization by young farmers, and initiatives targeting food waste. Thammavong highlighted the need for farmer organizations to align with policies and provide a roadmap for accessing funds. Sakamoto emphasized the importance of communicating AI technologies effectively to farmers and considering local contexts and costs. Phongphichith discussed initiatives addressing food waste through composting and community education, emphasizing the prioritization of nutrition and long-term food sufficiency.

The presentations and discussions underscored the importance of youth engagement, policy integration, technology utilization, and collaborative efforts in promoting sustainable agriculture and food security in the ASEAN region. Through innovative approaches and partnerships, stakeholders can work towards addressing challenges and achieving transformative impacts on agricultural systems and environmental sustainability.

At the end of the session, a ceremonial gesture of appreciation was extended to the speakers in the form of token awards. These awards served as a tangible expression of gratitude for their valuable contributions and insights shared during the discussions. This act not only honored the speakers for their expertise and participation but also highlighted the importance of their contributions in advancing the objectives of the forum.

## 2. Focus Group Discussion and Site Visit Apr 5, 2024 - Vientiane, Laos

The second day of the conference commenced with a comprehensive recap and self-evaluation session facilitated by the ASEAN Youth Organization. During this session, the 30 delegates engaged in a reflective process, assessing their level of awareness regarding food security prior to their participation in the event, and evaluating the extent to which their knowledge had evolved as a result of their engagement in the public forum. This exercise not only allowed for individual reflection but also provided valuable insights into the collective learning journey of the delegates. Additionally, the recap encapsulated the concerns and challenges identified by the delegates within their respective local communities, serving as a platform for the exchange of ideas and experiences aimed at fostering collaborative solutions to address food security issues at the grassroots level.



Following the recap session, Mr. Abhishek Vats, Co-founder of the AYO Research Center and Managing Director of the ASEAN Youth Organization, spearheaded a session focused on the methodology of approaching case studies and conducting focused group discussions (FGDs). Emphasizing the significance of these techniques, Mr. Vats underscored how case studies and FGDs provide delegates with invaluable real-world insights, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and effective communication skills. By collaboratively analyzing case studies, delegates are empowered to develop practical strategies to address complex challenges, effectively

bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. The overarching objectives of the session include facilitating deep insights, refining essential skills, and empowering delegates to emerge as adept decision-makers and influential leaders in their respective domains. Based on the survey during the session, it shows that most of the delegates have gained knowledge on MIAUW (Mobilizing Innovation for Agricultural Upscaling and Well-being) during the program.

### **The ASEAN Youth Talk Show : A Voice for the Youth**

The ensuing segment of the conference was dedicated to a specialized talk show, meticulously crafted to illuminate critical intersectional issues surrounding food security. This thought-provoking session delved deeply into the multifaceted challenges experienced by both youth and gender-based groups in navigating food security concerns. Furthermore, it scrutinized the pivotal role that technology plays in ameliorating the impacts of climate change, while also delving into strategies aimed at safeguarding the food security and overall well-being of indigenous communities across the ASEAN region.

Facilitated with precision by the esteemed ASEAN Youth Organization, this talk show served as a nexus for discourse, bringing together a distinguished panel of expert speakers, each representing distinct stakeholders in the realm of food security. Dr. Phanthanousone (Pépé) Khennavong, an esteemed representative of FAO Laos, offered invaluable insights drawn from the extensive expertise of the United Nations body, specializing in the intricate domains of food security and nutrition. In addition, the esteemed presence of Mr. Hiroyuki Yanagida, CEO of Tromso, a prominent Japanese entity, lent a private sector perspective to the dialogue. His contributions were poised to provide nuanced perspectives on the intersection of technology, climate change, and food security within the corporate landscape.

Complementing this illustrious panel was the inclusion of Peter Thipommajan, CEO of SaeLao, a dynamic youth-led initiative hailing from Laos. With a distinct focus on uplifting the skills and capacities of indigenous communities, Thipommajan's presence underscored the imperative of grassroots-driven solutions in fostering sustainable food security practices.

In essence, this meticulously curated talk show encapsulated a nexus of expertise, aiming to illuminate the complexities of food security through diverse lenses, thereby fostering a nuanced understanding and charting a path forward toward collective solutions.

**1. Dr. Phanthanousone (Pépé) Khennavong, representing FAO Laos: Dr. Phanthanousone (Pépé) was the first guest speaker and delved into the intersection**

of gender equality, youth empowerment, and sustainable agriculture within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Despite SDG 5's aim to eradicate discrimination against women and grant them equal rights to economic resources and land ownership, challenges persist for women in agriculture, with disparities in resource access and land ownership.

Dr. Khennavong advocated for empowering young women as agents of change, emphasizing the need for equitable resource allocation and an enabling environment for women's participation in agriculture. To nurture a sustainable agricultural environment, he proposed educational programs leveraging technology to engage ASEAN youth creatively in agriculture. Dr. Khennavong highlighted the importance of equipping youth with technological skills for sustainable agriculture, suggesting centralized data collection and analysis hubs. Additionally, he underscored the significance of intergenerational knowledge sharing, advocating for the integration of traditional wisdom with modern technology to address common challenges in sustainable agriculture.

**2. Mr. Hiroyuki Yanagida, General Manager, Overseas Department of Tromso:**

**Mr. Hiroyuki** addressed the vital nexus of agriculture, climate, and technology, stressing adaptive strategies for food security in ASEAN amid climate challenges. Yanagida emphasized biochar as a versatile solution for both mitigating and adapting to climate change impacts. Technology, including precision agriculture and drought-resistant crops, holds promise for bolstering climate-resilient agriculture across the four pillars of food security. Encouraging the transition to organic inputs necessitates economic viability and knowledge dissemination, with successful models existing in collaboration with universities. Yanagida outlined Tromso's expansion plans for biochar initiatives in ASEAN, welcoming partnerships. He underscored available funding avenues for climate-smart agricultural technologies, highlighting subsidies from the Japanese government and corporate interests, emphasizing the importance of presenting viable solutions to access funding.

**3. Mr. Peter Thipommajan CEO of SaeLao: Mr. Peter,**

highlighted several of the Sae Lao Projects and their impact on indigenous communities, focusing on education and economic empowerment in Vang Vieng City. With over 280 students benefiting from scholarships and vocational training, Sae Lao aims to enhance food security by providing useful knowledge and promoting traditional farming practices. Thipommajan highlighted their efforts to manage production costs and improve food security through small-scale organic gardening. He emphasized the importance of sustainable development, advocating for initiatives that celebrate indigenous agricultural practices and facilitate knowledge sharing. Thipommajan also outlined challenges and opportunities for youth initiating similar projects, emphasizing self-financing, crisis preparedness, community engagement, and proactive initiative-taking to ensure success and sustainability.

## **Focused Group Discussion**

During the afternoon session, participants engaged in focused group discussions (FGDs) to delve into specific aspects of sustainable agriculture. Led by facilitators and supported by AYO representatives, the FGDs addressed key themes such as Agriculture–Gender & Youth, Agriculture–Climate, and Agriculture–Indigenous People. Each group explored innovative strategies and practical solutions to promote sustainability and inclusivity in agricultural practices, aiming to harness the potential of diverse stakeholders and address pressing challenges in the ASEAN region.

### **Group 1: Agriculture–Gender & Youth:**

During the afternoon session, participants engaged in focused group discussions (FGDs) to explore various dimensions of sustainable agriculture. Led by Dr. Phanthanousone (Pépé) Khennavong and facilitated by Ms. Vanissa Nugrah Aulia from AYO, Group 1 delved into Agriculture–Gender & Youth. They emphasized a comprehensive approach, combining top-down advocacy for increased gender representation in government and educational reforms with bottom-up empowerment initiatives for women farmers.

### **Group 2: Agriculture–Climate Change and Technology:**

In Group 2, facilitated by Mr. Hiroyuki Yanagida and supported by Ms. Alouny Senduangdeth from AYO, participants discussed Agriculture–Climate. They explored the implementation of a Supplier to Business to Consumer model (S2B2C) to enhance efficiency and promote social inclusion, along with the importance of promoting e-commerce platforms for direct transactions between farmers and consumers.

### **Group 3: Agriculture–Indigenous People in ASEAN:**

Led by Mr. Peter Thipommajan and facilitated by Mr. Abhishek Vats from AYO, Group 3 focused on Agriculture–Indigenous People. They discussed extending formal education to promote knowledge transfer and increasing consultations with experts and local stakeholders to ensure the relevance of agricultural practices in indigenous communities.

## **Site Visit at Cofarm**

After the conclusion of the Focused Group Discussion, participants embarked on a site visit to CoFarm, where they engaged in an interactive session focused on sustainable agriculture. Leading the discussion was Mr. Max Keerati, Chief Executive Officer of Cofarm, who elaborated on the organization's initiatives. He highlighted their efforts in urban agriculture, particularly emphasizing the implementation of efficient planting management systems. Additionally, Mr. Keerati discussed Cofarm's

partnerships with restaurants, emphasizing their crucial role in supplying vegetables and addressing the demand-supply gap in Laos PDR. This discussion underscored the significance of urban agriculture, showcasing its methodology and the myriad benefits it offers to communities and the environment.

Following Mr. Keerati's presentation, delegates, Cofarm team members, and speakers jointly recited the Youth Declaration prepared by the ASEAN Youth Organization on Food Security. This declaration encapsulated the concerns and proposed solutions outlined during the focused group discussions. It served as a formal acknowledgment of the challenges faced by various communities, including women, youth, and indigenous groups, and emphasized the importance of collaboration among stakeholders from the private sector, international and regional organizations, national governments, and NGOs. Facilitated by Mr. Abhishek Vats, Co-Founder of AYO Research Center and Managing Director of the ASEAN Youth Organization, the declaration was meticulously prepared by Ms. Suthida Chang, Program Team Member of AYEF and Country Director of AYO-Thailand Chapter, ensuring a comprehensive representation of the discussed issues and proposed solutions.

### **Closing Ceremony:**

During the closing ceremony of the ASEAN Youth Economic Forum (AYEF) 2024, participants gathered to reflect on the insightful discussions and fruitful collaborations that transpired throughout the event. The ceremony commenced with remarks from distinguished guests and organizers, highlighting the significance of youth engagement in addressing economic and agricultural challenges within the ASEAN region.

Following the speeches, awards were announced to recognize outstanding contributions and achievements during the forum. The "Best Delegate" award was presented to **Mr. Adib Azizan from Malaysia, an individual** who demonstrated exceptional leadership, diplomacy, and engagement during the discussions and activities. Additionally, the "Best Group Idea" was awarded to Group 2 (**Emmalyn Tugas, Moch. Azkal Azkiya Aziz, Christina Aroma Ndraha, Truston Yo, Daniel Lee, Pachara Dejpho, Hein Si Thu, Caunca Jezreel Larry, Siti Jaafar**) bestowed upon the group that proposed the most innovative and impactful solution to address a pressing issue in agriculture or economic development.

As the recipients of these awards were announced and congratulated, the ceremony concluded with expressions of gratitude to all participants, organizers, and partners

for their dedication and commitment to advancing sustainable socioeconomic development and fostering collaboration within the ASEAN community.

## II. Online Course on Sustainable Agriculture by AYO Academy:

The Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security course, a cornerstone of our efforts within the ASEAN Youth Economic Forum (AYEF), has concluded with resounding success. This report provides a comprehensive overview of the course's impact and achievements, reflecting our commitment to empowering youth across ASEAN countries with essential knowledge and skills in sustainable agriculture.

### Key Statistics:

- 1. Enrollment:** A total of 1,356 students enrolled in the course, demonstrating a strong interest and commitment to learning about sustainable agricultural practices.
- 2. Completion Rate:** Among the enrolled students, 547 have successfully completed the course, showcasing their dedication to mastering the subject matter.
- 3. Ongoing Participation:** Presently, 809 students are actively engaged in the course, underscoring a continued interest in advancing their understanding of sustainable agriculture and food security.
- 4. Student Feedback:** A noteworthy aspect of the course's success is the overwhelmingly positive feedback received from students. With 233 reviews submitted, the course has achieved an outstanding cumulative rating of 4.90 out of 5, highlighting its effectiveness and relevance.

### Impact and Implications:

The significant enrollment and completion rates signify a strong appetite among youth for education and engagement in sustainable development initiatives. By equipping students with the necessary knowledge and skills, we are fostering a generation of informed and empowered leaders capable of addressing critical challenges in agriculture and food security.

Building on the success of the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security course, we remain committed to expanding educational opportunities and fostering collaboration within the ASEAN community. Moving forward, we will continue to refine and enhance our course offerings, leveraging feedback and insights to ensure maximum impact and relevance.



**III. Social Media Report**

AYEF 2024 covered on Instagram and Facebook with the reach and engagement

No	Social Media	Total Posts	Total Impressions	Total Reached
1	Instagram Story	28	30,812	30,644
2	Instagram Feed	18	180,039	157,720
3	Instagram Live	6	19,361	9,947
4	Facebook Feed	19	162,780	157,679
5	Facebook Story	28	24,643	24,508

Impressions = the information seen by people (followers and unfollowers)  
 Reached = the number of people who have seen the information

**IV. Media and coverage**

AYEF 2024 was attended by 4 different local media partners and published by media as listed below;

1. Lao National Television [Click here](#)
2. Vientiane Times [Click Here](#) or News Paper page number (8) [Click here](#)
3. Lao News Agency (KPL News) [Check Here](#), local Language [Click here](#), On Facebook [Click here](#)
4. Vientiane Mai (News Paper [Click here](#), Facebook [Click Here](#))
5. People Gazette Nigeria [Check Here](#)
6. Lao VOA News [Click Here](#)
7. Kabar Bangka [Click Here](#)
8. Bacakoran [Click Here](#)
9. ABS-CBN News [Click Here](#)
10. Katakabar [Click Here](#)
11. Elaeis.co [Click Here](#)
12. Philippines Embassy Portal [Click Here](#)
13. XinhuaNews [Click Here](#)
14. Medan Merdeka [Click Here](#)
15. Business Mirror [Click Here](#)
16. Sulutnews [Click Here](#)
17. Myelaeis [Click Here](#)
18. Klik Warta [Click Here](#)
19. Getldiom [Click Here](#)
20. Laotian Times [Click Here](#)
21. NewsDirectory3 [Click Here](#)

## V. Participation

### A. AYEF 2024 Delegates

The registration period for AYEF 2024 delegates commenced on February 20th, resulting in a significant turnout, with 277 pre-registration and 373 enthusiastic members registered as delegates. Below are the requirements set by the committee;

1. One of the ASEAN Member States or Japan nationality
2. Age between 18-35 years old
3. Possess a good command of English (Most of the session will be conducted in English) *\*Lao-English Translator was available on site.*
4. Having a knowledge of Sustainable Agriculture and/or Food Security
5. Person with disabilities is encouraged to apply
6. Mandatory to take the course of Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security provided by AYO Academy

Following a meticulous screening process during the interview session held from February 29th to March 3rd, only 50 individuals were shortlisted for further consideration. Notably, nine candidates received recommendations from organizational partners (including Mekong Institute, AIMECC, AFA, Greenpeace, Emancipate, and AYO). Ultimately, 30 candidates were successfully accepted as delegates.

Preparation for the forthcoming event commenced swiftly, with the delegates' orientation and onboarding scheduled for April 26th, setting the stage for a promising and impactful AYEF 2024.

There were 2 categories of delegates, fully funded and partially funded. Below are the descriptions of the following categories:

1. Fully funded delegates:
  - Program covered
  - Meeting package covered
  - Return Flights covered
  - Hotel accommodation covered
  - Meals during program are covered (except mini bars at hotels and outside program hours)
  - Local transportation covered
  - Starter pack
2. Partially funded delegates:
  - Program covered
  - Meeting package covered

- Hotel accommodation covered
- Meals during programs are covered (except mini bars at hotels and outside program hours)
- Local transportation covered
- Starter Pack

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Delegation Status</b>
1.	Nor Imran	Malaysia	Selangor Youth Community
2.	Piyachat Chanla	Thailand	Mekong Institute
3.	Kazuki Sakomoto	Japan	Sagri - AMEICC Recommendation
4.	Nattaya Sisodmat	Philippines	Asia Farmer Association
5.	Tisa Larasati	Indonesia	Emancipate - Partner
6.	Yusuke Kaga	Japan	AYO Recommendation
7.	Daniel Lee Cha Chin	Malaysia	AYO Recommendation
8.	Nguyen Mai Trang	Vietnam	AYO Recommendation
9.	Krystyn Naya S. Nerona	Philippines	AYO Recommendation
10.	Suom Miet	Cambodia	Fully Funded
11.	Raymond Rosette Andres	Philippines	Fully Funded
12.	Phasawit Juatatungcharoen	Thailand	Fully Funded
13.	Hsu Htoo Nandar Aung	Myanmar	Fully Funded
14.	Moch. Azkal Azkiya Aziz	Indonesia	Fully Funded
15.	Emmalyn Tugas	Philippines	Fully Funded
16.	Pachara Dejpho	Thailand	Fully Funded
17.	Sitthideth Abhay	Laos	Fully Funded
18.	Truston Yu	Indonesia	Fully Funded
19.	Phimmaly Thammavong	Laos	Fully Funded

20.	Youliomone Dorbounou	Laos	Fully Funded
21.	Amra Oum	Cambodia	Partially Funded
22.	Siti Jaafar	Brunei	Partially Funded
23.	Muhammad Raka Hadiyan	Indonesia	Partially Funded
24.	Muhammad Faris Daniel	Malaysia	Partially Funded
25.	Hein Si Thu	Myanmar	Partially Funded
26.	Caunca Jezreel Larry	Philippines	Partially Funded
27.	Alex Lew	Singapore	Partially Funded
28.	Adib Azizan	Malaysia	Partially Funded
29.	Christina Putri Aroma Ndraha	Indonesia	Partially Funded
30.	Le Thanh Hao	Vietnam	Partially Funded

**A. Public Forum Participants**

The online registration for the AYEF public forum was open from March 9th to March 25th, providing interested individuals ample time to sign up for participation.

During the registration period, a total of 546 individuals from youth, governmental, and private sectors around the world registered to participate in the forum. The response reflects significant interest in the forum's themes and objectives.

The registered participants are divided into two categories: online and on-site participants.

1. Online Participants:

Total: 381 registrations  
 Total online participants/Unique Viewers: 313

Report Generated:	Apr 06, 2024 2:07 PM					
Topic	Webinar ID	Actual Start Time	Actual Duration (minutes)	Unique Viewers	Total Users	Max Concurrent Views
AYEF 2024 Virtual Participants	863 2319 7123	Apr 4, 2024 7:05 AM	562	313	1088	139

These participants have participated in the forum virtually, engaging in discussions and activities remotely via Zoom Webinar.

## 2. On-Site Participants:

Total: 164 registrations of youth from across ASEAN region (this reflects the total number of people who registered to join the public forum offline in Vientiane).

Total on-site confirmed attendance : 204 People

Total on-site attendance showed up: 177 People

Attendance ratio: **86.7 %**

including (30 Delegates, 17 Committee and LOs, 34 Speakers and VIPs, 36 Partner's Representatives and Medias, and 60 public participants).

Due to limited spots for on-site participants, priority was given to students interested in joining the forum. These participants have physically attended the forum, allowing for in-person interactions and networking opportunities. In addition, the registered participants represent a broad spectrum of demographics, including:

- 1) Age: Participants span various age groups (below 18 – 35), reflecting the intergenerational nature of the forum.
- 2) Sectors: Participants come from diverse sectors, including youth organizations, government agencies, and private enterprises.
- 3) Geographical Distribution: Participants hail from regions across the globe, with the majority in ASEAN, showcasing the forum's global reach and inclusivity.

In conclusion, the overwhelming response to the AYEF public forum registration underscores the significance of youth empowerment and collaboration across sectors in addressing global challenges. The diverse representation of participants, both online and on-site, sets the stage for rich and inclusive discussions during the forum.

**VI. Evaluation/Feedback**

**A. Onsite and Online Participants**

Following the conclusion of the AYEF 2024 program, the AYEF 2024 team is pleased to report receiving exceptional feedback from participants. The overall program, encompassing online and onsite participation, garnered a high satisfaction rating **(4.5 out of 5)** based on participant expectations as measured through feedback forms. Several vital aspects were identified as crucial to this success, and the detailed results of the participant feedback are outlined below.

Aspect Evaluation	Result
Registration Process	4.5
Knowledge in Theme	4.7
Program Execution	4.5
Networking and Growth	4.4
Panel Discussion	4.5
Hotel Venue	4.3
Recommendation	4.6
Overall Program	4.5

**Participant Feedback Analysis**

In addition to program evaluation, participants were invited to share their experiences at AYEF 2024. Notably, only one concern was raised by virtual participants: the camera position during presentations. Improved speaker placement on stage was suggested better to capture the onsite forum's ambiance for virtual attendees. While this was the only minor concern, it did not significantly detract from the overall virtual experience, and participants remained engaged throughout the forum. It is important to note that the virtual participants committee reported a high activity level within the designated WhatsApp group. Participants actively shared notes and session summaries and engaged in detailed discussions about the presented information.

**Positive Feedback and Highlights**

The majority of participants expressed their belief that the forum was exceptional. The program was lauded for its meticulous planning and execution, and the AYEF 2024 merchandise bag containing Laotian local products (red rice, palm sugar, and tea) was very well-received. Sessions 2 and 4 emerged as particular favorites among participants. The themes of these sessions were deemed highly relevant to current

global knowledge and pressing issues. Additionally, the moderators and speakers of these sessions were praised for their engaging and enthusiastic delivery.

In conclusion, the AYEF 2024 program for participants demonstrably achieved a high level of satisfaction among participants. The feedback highlights the success of the program's design and execution and provides valuable insights for future iterations of the AYEF forum.

### Suggestions for Improvement

In the spirit of the constructive feedback provided by our esteemed speakers, it's clear that while our recent ASEAN Youth Economic Forum 2024 was a significant achievement, there's room for improvement in coordinating and communicating within our committee and with stakeholders. Optimistically, by enhancing our coordination efforts and fostering clearer communication channels, we can effectively leverage our collective expertise and drive even greater impact in future initiatives. This insightful advice is pivotal in our commitment to strengthening our collaborative processes, ensuring that we continue to advance towards our shared goals for a sustainable ASEAN-Japan partnership.

## VII. Committee

AYO Committee (Onsite and Remote Support):

	Name	Position/Role
1.	Senjaya Mulia	Project Director
2.	Juneliza Pandela	Assistant Project Director
3.	Abhishek Vats	International Cooperation
4.	Kevin Thomas Mandala	Finance and Admin
5.	Thonn Hsu	Partnerships
6.	Linthone Bouanvanheung	Logistic and Procurement
7.	Khampaiboun Intavanh	Logistic and Procurement
8.	Alouny Senduangdeth	Logistic and Program
9.	Kuncharee Thannadoenkhaio	Public Participants Management
10.	Nadhira Salsabila	Delegation and LO Management

11.	Syabil Syach Pachlefi	Program and LO Management
12.	Suthida Chang	Program
14.	Vanissa Aulia	Program
15.	Fernando Jonathan	Marketing and Communications
16.	Dai Shaoling	Marketing and Communications
17.	Lutfiyah Hafizzah	Design and Graphics

Volunteers (Liaison Officers)

1. Sounisa Khammoungkhoun
2. Phouthasith Phengsavath
3. Thiphaphone Sihavong
4. Maniyom Anonthisen
5. Phounsombath Sinthavong
6. Xaybandith
7. Julie Paimany
8. Phouthasa Maggie
9. Sounida
- 10.

**VIII. Logistics**

To accommodate all needs for the 4-day event (delegates' and guest' arrival, main event, secondary event, and delegates' departure), 15 persons were deployed to handle all logistics arrangements. Here are the details of the logistics arrangements for 4 days:

**A. Day 0 (Delegates Arrival)**

- Meal box
- AYEF ID Card + Lanyard
- AYEF T-shirt
- Hotel room arrangement for 30 Delegates, 10 VIPs, and speakers
- Transportation arrangement (2-unit van)
- Additional dinner arrangement at Eastin Hotel + VIP

**B. Day 1 (Main Event)**

- Stage Level
- Backdrop (photo booth + stage)
- LED Screen (4\*6)
- LED Frame (left and side wings)
- Lighting Arrangement (moving beam, fresnel bar, rigging light)
- Sound System 7000 Watt
- Online Conference System (4k camera + tripod)



- Wireless mic (4 unit)
- Walkie talkie (10 unit)
- Decoration (60 pot plant, flower arrangement)
- Table decoration (acrylic for guest name, tablecloth, centerpiece)
- Documentation (2 photo cameras, 1 video camera, 1 Vicon camera)
- 5-unit laptop (onsite and online operator)
- Multimedia generator
- Token of appreciation (for speaker)
- Local product showcase arrangement (various FMCG products from local brands)
- Transportation arrangement (50 seater bus)
- Meeting package arrangement (1 lunch + 2 times snack) + VIP room

**C. Day 2 (Side Event)**

- TV and projector
- Stationeries
- Documentation (2 camera)
- Transportation arrangement (50 seater bus)
- Site arrangement
- Gala dinner arrangement (canape + free flow drink)

**D. Day 3 (Delegates departure)**

- Transportation arrangement (2-unit van)

**IX. Financial**

All expenses needed to cover 4 days of project implementation described as below.

**A. Hotel Meeting Package (\$13.515) 19.32% from total expense**

- Crowne Plaza full day meeting package (200px)
- Eastin Hotel half day meeting package (50px)
- Eastin Hotel gala dinner event package (50px)
- Eastin Hotel VIP dinner package day 0 (20px)
- Dinner package restaurant (50px)

**B. Accommodation (\$28.460) 40.68% from total expense**

- Airfare
- Deluxe hotel room, 3 nights, include breakfast at Eastin hotel
- Deluxe hotel room, 3 nights, include breakfast at Mantra hotel
- Deluxe hotel room, 6 nights, include breakfast at Eastin hotel (Committee)
- 2 Mini van for delegates pickup
- 2 Mini van for airport transfer

**C. Speaker + VIP Accommodation (\$6.848) 9.8% from total expense**

- Airfare

- Deluxe hotel room, 3 nights, include breakfast at Eastin hotel
- Mini van for airport pickup and transfers

**E. Logistic (\$7.820) 11.18% from total expense**

- Stage Arrangement (stage, lighting, sound, decoration, backdrop, etc)
- Video conference toolkit
- Equipment (camera + laptop + projector, tv) rent
- Merchandise (ID Card, lanyard, t-shirt, tote bag, lao local product)
- Token of appreciation
- Transportation (bus + mini van) rent
- Stationeries (marker, flipchart, pen, etc)

**F. Human Resources and Experts Fee (\$13.300) 19.01% from total expense**

- MC and moderator fee
- Speaker' fee
- Trainer and Facilitator fee
- Liaison officers
- Steering and Supporting Committee fee

Budget Proposed: **\$69.985**

Budget Absorption: **\$69.943**

Budget Usage: **99.94%**

**X. Partnerships Outreach**

Beginning in January 2024, the partnership outreach for AYEF 2024 was initiated with a focus on engaging diverse organizations across the ASEAN region. Over 80 entities spanning NGOs/NPOs, universities, private companies, and government ministries were identified for potential collaboration. These organizations were selected based on their involvement in areas relevant to the forum's themes, including food security, food technology, agriculture, agricultural technology, and economics.

Comprehensive outreach efforts were conducted, including the distribution of partnership invitation letters to the identified organizations. Follow-up emails were subsequently sent on a weekly basis, with a total of two follow-ups to ensure thorough communication. Organizations that did not respond after the follow-up period were categorized into a "No Reply" list for further evaluation.

Out of the 80 organizations and ministries initially invited, a positive response was received from about 30 entities, indicating their interest in participating in AYEF 2024.

Initially Invited Organizations	Organizations and	Final Partnered
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and Ministries	Ministries that replied to the invitation	Organizations and Ministries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Save the Earth Cambodia,</li> <li>● Saeda Laos,</li> <li>● ADRA Laos,</li> <li>● Good Neighbors Laos,</li> <li>● Helvetas Laos,</li> <li>● The Asia Foundation Laos,</li> <li>● WWF Laos,</li> <li>● FAO Lao PDR,</li> <li>● World Food Programme, Laos,</li> <li>● Ecosystem Conservation and Community Development Initiative,</li> <li>● Philippine Economic Society,</li> <li>● Royal Academy of Agriculture,</li> <li>● IPB University,</li> <li>● National University of Laos,</li> <li>● Souphanouvong University,</li> <li>● National Agriculture and Forestry Institute,</li> <li>● Universiti Malaya,</li> <li>● Strategy First University,</li> <li>● Myanmar Imperial University,</li> <li>● University of Foreign Languages Yangon,</li> <li>● University of Information Technology Yangon,</li> <li>● National Management Degree College Myanmar,</li> <li>● Yezin Agricultural University,</li> <li>● James Cook University Singapore,</li> <li>● Chiang Mai University,</li> <li>● Mekong University,</li> <li>● Khon Kaen University,</li> <li>● Hue University,</li> <li>● VNU Vietnam Japan University,</li> <li>● Sae Lao Project,</li> <li>● Participatory Development Training Center,</li> <li>● Agroasie Farm,</li> <li>● Yensabai Organic Farm,</li> <li>● Love Earth Organic,</li> <li>● Citiponics,</li> <li>● Energaia,</li> <li>● Varmers,</li> <li>● Protanica,</li> <li>● TH Group,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Save the Earth Cambodia,</li> <li>● Saeda Laos,</li> <li>● WWF Laos,</li> <li>● FAO Lao PDR,</li> <li>● National University of Laos,</li> <li>● Universiti Malaya,</li> <li>● University of Information Technology Yangon,</li> <li>● Yezin Agricultural University,</li> <li>● Mekong University,</li> <li>● Khon Kaen University,</li> <li>● Sae Lao Project,</li> <li>● Laos Farmer Network,</li> <li>● SEARCA,</li> <li>● Greenpeace,</li> <li>● Soukthavone Agriculture,</li> <li>● Delegation of the European Union to Lao PDR,</li> <li>● Young Entrepreneur Association of Laos,</li> <li>● HUMANA People to People, Laos,</li> <li>● Maeying Huamjai Phattana (MHP),</li> <li>● Agro-Forestry Development Consultant (AFC),</li> <li>● Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Vientiane,</li> <li>● Embassy of Malaysia in Vientiane,</li> <li>● Embassy of the Philippines in Vientiane, Lao PDR,</li> <li>● Royal Thai Embassy in Vientiane,</li> <li>● Embassy of Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Vientiane, Laos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Save the Earth Cambodia,</li> <li>● Saeda Laos,</li> <li>● FAO Lao PDR,</li> <li>● Mekong University,</li> <li>● Khon Kaen University,</li> <li>● Sae Lao Project,</li> <li>● Laos Farmer Network,</li> <li>● SEARCA,</li> <li>● Greenpeace,</li> <li>● Soukthavone Agriculture,</li> <li>● Delegation of the European Union to Lao PDR,</li> <li>● Young Entrepreneur Association of Laos,</li> <li>● HUMANA People to People, Laos,</li> <li>● Agro-Forestry Development Consultant (AFC),</li> <li>● Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Vientiane,</li> <li>● Embassy of Malaysia in Vientiane,</li> <li>● Embassy of the Philippines in Vientiane, Lao PDR,</li> <li>● Royal Thai Embassy in Vientiane,</li> <li>● Embassy of Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Vientiane, Laos</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• International Fund for Agricultural Development,</li><li>• Laos Farmer Network,</li><li>• Provincial Local Government Unit Quezon,</li><li>• SEARCA,</li><li>• National Economic Development Authority Calabarzon,</li><li>• Trinity University of Asia,</li><li>• University of the Philippines Los Banos,</li><li>• Greenpeace,</li><li>• KAMMPIL Inc,</li><li>• Soukthavone Agriculture,</li><li>• Delegation of the European Union to Lao PDR,</li><li>• Young Entrepreneur Association of Laos,</li><li>• Xao Ban,</li><li>• Lao Youth Union,</li><li>• HUMANA People to People, Laos,</li><li>• Love Natural Resource Association (LNRA),</li><li>• Maeying Huamjai Phattana (MHP),</li><li>• Microfinance Association (MFA),</li><li>• Promote Sustainable Natural Resource Use Association (PSNUA),</li><li>• The Association for Community Training and Development (ACTD),</li><li>• Agro-Forestry Development Consultant (AFC),</li><li>• Oxfam Laos</li><li>• Department of Agriculture and Agrifood in Brunei,</li><li>• Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in Cambodia,</li><li>• Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Laos,</li><li>• Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security in Malaysia,</li><li>• Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation in Myanmar,</li><li>• Department of Agriculture in the Philippines,</li><li>• Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives in Thailand,</li><li>• Ministry of Agriculture and Rural</li></ul>		
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<p>Development in Vietnam,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Embassy of Brunei Darussalam in Vientiane,</li> <li>● Embassy of Cambodia in Vientiane,</li> <li>● Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Vientiane,</li> <li>● Embassy of Malaysia in Vientiane,</li> <li>● Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in Vientiane,</li> <li>● Embassy of the Philippines in Vientiane, Lao PDR,</li> <li>● Embassy of the Republic of Singapore in Vientiane,</li> <li>● Royal Thai Embassy in Vientiane,</li> <li>● Embassy of Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Vientiane, Laos</li> </ul>		
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In addition to their participation as partners, some organizations such as Save the Earth Cambodia, FAO Laos, Greenpeace Indonesia, Laos Farmer Network, Sae Lao Project, and Saeda Laos were also invited to contribute as speakers during the forum, enriching the event’s content with their expertise and insights. Following the confirmation of the partnership, the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the forum were shared with the confirmed partners to clarify their roles and responsibilities.

To maintain effective communication and coordination, partners were informed about forum logistics, program details, and any updates through WhatsApp channels. Furthermore, two days before the forum, partners received the AYEF 2024 Program Guide to facilitate their engagement and preparation for the event.

During the Public Forum of AYEF 2024, held at Crowne Plaza Hotel in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 4th April 2024, approximately 40 representatives from the partnered organizations attended the event. Their active participation contributed to the forum’s success and facilitated fruitful discussions on food security and economic development in the ASEAN region.

## **XI. Commitment to Sustainability**

The ASEAN Youth Economic Forum (AYEF) 2024 remained strong in the ASEAN Youth Organization's commitment to environmental sustainability. The Committee strived to reduce the amount of printed materials during the preparation and implementation of AYEF. The use of single-use plastics, notably plastic bottles and straws, was also eliminated from the Public Forum. Apart from encouraging participants to bring their own containers, AYO identified event venues that utilized reusable glass bottles. Furthermore, AYEF worked with venues to offer tailored meal options according to participants' dietary requirements. This was done in an effort to reduce food waste. Emphasis was also placed on sourcing local produce and supporting local suppliers to minimize AYEF's carbon footprint from food and related transportation.

## **XII. Way Forward; Japan - Lao PDR Co-creation Analysis**

AYEF 2024 marks a significant milestone in the future cooperation between ASEAN and Japan, particularly in Lao PDR, fostering an environment for robust exchange of ideas, technology, and business opportunities. Through constructive dialogue and collaboration, the forum has brought together diverse stakeholders, including government officials, industry leaders, academics, and civil society representatives. By addressing key cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, climate resilience, and youth empowerment in agriculture, AYEF 2024 has laid the groundwork for actionable strategies and partnerships to drive sustainable development across the region.

One of the standout features of AYEF 2024 is its emphasis on youth participation and empowerment. By providing a platform for young delegates to showcase their creativity, leadership skills, and commitment to positive change, the forum has empowered the next generation of leaders to shape the future of their communities in the ASEAN, Japan and Lao PDR in particular. AYEF 2024 also brought diverse stakeholders and facilitated the potential collaborations amongst them.

Looking ahead, AYEF 2024 has unlocked new opportunities for Japan-Lao PDR cooperation in various sectors, including social, economic, and technology-driven initiatives. Below are the the potential co-creation initiatives between Japan - Lao PDR;

### **1. Technological-driven initiatives**

AYEF 2024 increased awareness of tools and technologies employed by Japanese companies to support ASEAN's green transition presents opportunities for greater collaboration and investment in sustainable agriculture. These projects would leverage the expertise and resources of both Japan, Lao PDR or other ASEAN Member States to develop innovative farming technologies, resilient agricultural practices, and capacity-building programs for farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs across the region. AYEF 2024 was participated by

many private companies from Japan and Lao PDR, and many of them are technological-driven companies such as Sagri, Tromso, Co-Farm, Sae-Lao, and Laos Farmers Association, and many others. This platform helps them to connect and collaborate in the future in terms of technological exchange.

**2. Business and investment opportunities**

By bringing together stakeholders from various sectors such as agriculture businesses (agribusiness), government officials, farmers associations, technological experts, the youth, and other stakeholders, to deepen the understanding about the market, challenges, and potentials, the AYEF 2024 also become a platform for them to share business opportunities among themselves, enhance the economic development, and strengthen the cooperation between the countries.

**3. Youth-Led (Socio-cultural) initiatives.**

Through focused discussions, site visits, and interactive sessions, youth participants have been able to voice their perspectives, propose innovative solutions, and contribute meaningfully to the ongoing dialogue on regional development. The forum has served as a catalyst for sharing best practices and co-creating localized solutions, particularly in addressing sustainability challenges. In the future, projects aimed at enhancing Japan-Lao PDR relations and focusing on youth development could include joint research and development initiatives in areas such as agritech and sustainable agriculture. Furthermore, youth exchange programs, internships, and mentorship opportunities could be established to facilitate knowledge exchange, foster cultural understanding, and empower young people to become agents of change in their communities.

Overall, AYEF 2024 has set the stage for a deeper, more collaborative partnership between ASEAN and Japan particularly in Lao PDR, driven by the shared goal of building a more inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous future for all. By harnessing the energy, enthusiasm, and talent of its youth population, both regions are well-positioned to address the complex challenges facing the region and create lasting impact for generations to come.

### **XIII. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the ASEAN Youth Economic Forum (AYEF) 2024 has undoubtedly made a significant impact on both the ASEAN region and its youth population. Throughout the event, passionate and driven young leaders from diverse backgrounds came together to explore innovative solutions to pressing economic and agricultural challenges facing the region.

AYEF 2024 served as a platform for constructive dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collaboration among stakeholders, including government officials, industry leaders, academics, and representatives from civil society. The forum facilitated meaningful discussions on key issues such as gender equality, climate resilience, indigenous rights, and youth empowerment in agriculture, paving the way for actionable strategies and partnerships to drive sustainable development in the ASEAN region.

Moreover, AYEF 2024 provided a unique opportunity for youth participants to showcase their creativity, leadership skills, and commitment to positive change. Through focused group discussions, site visits, and interactive sessions, young delegates were empowered to voice their perspectives, propose innovative solutions, and contribute to shaping the future of their communities and the ASEAN region as a whole.

The impact of AYEF 2024 extends beyond the event itself, as the knowledge, insights, and networks forged during the forum will continue to inspire and drive positive change long into the future. By harnessing the energy, enthusiasm, and talent of its youth population, ASEAN is poised to tackle the complex economic and agricultural challenges ahead and build a more inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous future for all. AYEF 2024 has laid a solid foundation for ongoing collaboration and action, ensuring that the voices and aspirations of ASEAN's youth remain at the forefront of regional development efforts.

Projecting into the future, AYEF 2024 has opened new opportunities for ASEAN-Japan cooperation in areas of social, economic and technology to address sustainability challenges. The policy landscape of Japan-ASEAN cooperation presented through AYEF 2024 serves as a framework for ASEAN and Japanese youth to share best practices and co-create localized solutions. Similarly, the increased awareness of tools that Japanese companies are employing to support ASEAN's green transition could increase the presence of Japanese companies in ASEAN. This not only paves the way for Japanese firms to expand horizontally across ASEAN Member States but integrates them deeper into local economies as solution-providers for sustainable agriculture. Furthermore, this creates a ripple effect across education and policy as institutions respond to the shifting demand for green jobs, increasing avenues for regional cooperation on sustainable development.



### XIII. Support Documents

1. [Delegates Pledge/Declaration](#)
2. [Documentation/Photos](#)
3. [Press Release](#) and [Selected Pictures](#)
4. [Delegates Handbook](#)
5. [AYO Academy Course](#)
6. Speaker's [presentation materials](#)

*Note: This report was created in accomplishment of the ASEAN Youth Economic Forum 2024. Any feedback, concerns or questions, please contact Senjaya Mulia, the Project Director of AYEF 2024 at [s-mulia@aseanyouth.net](mailto:s-mulia@aseanyouth.net)*