

Asia



ASEAN

## Strengthening Quality Infrastructure in ASEAN

**Objective** Members States are enabled to gear trade-relevant procedures of quality infrastructure to regional guidelines and international good practices, with special emphasis on the CLM countries and food safety.

**Approach** The ten Member States of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) are striving towards economic integration to enable the free movement of goods and services as well as the free movement of capital and labour. One prerequisite for the trade of goods and services is that these comply with agreed standards and technical regulations. The basis for this is a well-functioning quality infrastructure. Quality infrastructure refers to all the processes that are necessary for quality assurance and the protection of consumers. In addition to standards and technical regulations, it also includes metrology, accreditation, certification and testing. Compliance must, on the one hand, be harmonized at the regional level and, on the other hand, it must be verifiably implemented at the national level.

This project marks the third phase of cooperation between PTB and the ASEAN Sectoral Body under the purview of the ASEAN Economic Ministers – the ASEAN Consultative Committee on Standards and Quality (ACCSQ). The project supports the ACCSQ and its related working groups on 1) Standards, 2) Accreditation and Conformity Assessment, 3) Legal Metrology and 4) the Prepared Foodstuff Product Working Group (PFPWG) in developing regionally harmonized guidelines and mechanisms which are aligned with international standards and best practices.

To enable practical implementation of regionally harmonized guidelines at the national level, it provides capacity building through technical train-the-trainers seminars. With the objective of reducing heterogeneity, it supports ASEAN's efforts to narrow down the development gap by providing specific trainings and consultancy services to the CLM countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar). In addition, there will be awareness-raising activities on quality infrastructure for the private sector, regulatory authorities and consumers.

**Impact** Through an increasingly harmonized set of regulations and the development of national capacities in the field of quality infrastructure, ASEAN will be supported in the process of regional harmonization. Thanks to improved capacities at the national and regional levels, the ASEAN Member States will benefit more readily from the ASEAN Economic Community's trade potential. In particular, small and medium-sized enterprises, which depend on locally available QI services to support their participation in the regional and international markets, will have access to better services. Ultimately, consumers in ASEAN benefit as well, gaining better access to services and reaping the benefits of improved product quality, better overall health and consumer protection.

**Cooperation** The project is carried out in close cooperation with other German and international implementing organizations, such as the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). A close coordination is also foreseen with the Enhanced ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU (ARISE Plus programme).

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