



“The development of a common agenda for smart infrastructure systems and mobility services across the ASEAN could leverage the economy out of the crisis in an inclusive and sustainable way.”

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Image Source: A worker in the outskirts of Shanghai, China. A student at the ICCN Congress in North Molucas, Indonesia. Images by Nicolas J.A. BUCHOUD, all rights reserved ©.





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## Cross border data management and regional value chains: A tentative agenda for recovery through smart urbanization in the ASEAN context

### Better Data Collection, Management, and Utilization

Recalibrating national spending in order to achieve higher equality, is one part of the post Covid-19 crisis equation. The other one is improving governance to maximize public spending and investments efficiency.

With all its cataclysm, the ongoing crisis also brought several “blessings in disguise”, one of which is better data collection and management. In Indonesia, before the pandemic, there has been no substantial improvement in terms data availability. During the pandemic, such data has become critically important for the government to channel social assistance and meet the subsistence needs of affected social groups and households. The progress recently made data collection should could serve as a benchmark for better, more efficient policy implementation and budget allocation in the future, provided they are deepened and sustained.

In practice, poor real time and accurate data to support the program implementation have hindered the complete delivery of stimulus programs, in part because of a deficit of coordination between central and local governments. We view three ways to resolve the issue in particular 1) providing real time and accurate data which can be used for a better targeting and planning 2) improving the system by escalating the role of potential contributors, i.e. developing self-report systems, using big data for tracking economic recovery, engaging private sector and community stakeholders to contribute to data updating; and last but not least 3) by making investment in monitoring and evaluation program (LPEM FEB UI, 2020). A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation mechanism can promote fast modification or adaptation of program delivery and at the same, could help in creating job opportunity for the medium skilled workers.

At a regional level, the data governance may help each ASEAN member to monitor the condition and improvement of their sister countries. Cross-border data management within ASEAN such as data for trade may provide suitable tools for arranging economic recovery strategies. Furthermore, cross-border data governance will also increase the transparency and accountabilities for organization's decision. On this term, ASEAN may use the availability of cross-border data to increase cooperation and integration effort between the countries through certain policies. For example, the data may be used to build a firm economic and business framework to enhance the integration in supply chains through the global value chains (GVCs). In terms of trade, this will benefit ASEAN countries since almost countries have a higher trade volume Intra-ASEAN than with other trading partners. In addition, since the trade integration within ASEAN is relatively intense, better data monitor could provide a potential disruption mapping of which cities or areas within ASEAN, in the case of one manufacturer in ASEAN cities is being disrupted. Furthermore, a better data integration and monitoring intra-ASEAN would provide a better recovery tracker of Covid-19 pandemic.

Data management is not a new issue for ASEAN countries as they have built a framework and mechanism for cross-border data governance based on several guidelines presented by OECD, APEC, EU-GDPR, and Standards for Personal Data Protection for Ibero-American States. However, the progress of the framework varies across the

ASEAN region, considering the technological adoption and resources. A recent report from the United Nations (2020) on The Sustainable Development Goals also mentioned that the data gaps still exist in terms of geographical coverage, timeliness, and also level of disaggregation. As the Covid-19 pandemic is affecting most countries, the availability of data has become more important especially in order to produce day-to-day decisions that will affect the well-being of many agents.

As a solid form of institutions, ASEAN may dive deeper to solve the issue and enforcing the cross-data governance through certain mechanisms. Aside from the existing data framework mentioned earlier, ASEAN can also facilitate a distinct forum for resource and knowledge sharing in terms of data management. Any constraints regarding the data management should be reviewed in order to increase the availability across the region. Better data governance both in country scope and region scope will help each of economies to be well-prepared for another sudden shock that may come after. However, several legal issues such as privacy law should not be neglected as standardized and trustworthy data exchange environment is essential. The mechanism proposed above is expected to support each of ASEAN member to overcome negative impacts caused by the pandemic through the establishment of strong and trustworthy data governance.

## Strengthening Regional Value Chain through Smart Cities Integration Across Regions

To integrate cities across ASEAN region into a comprehensive and solid value chain, the development of cities towards a more sustainable urbanization models is crucial. One way to achieve change is by pursuing the agenda of smart cities. Judging from the existing trend, most cities in Indonesia are experiencing rapid development which is resulting in inadequate infrastructure problems. The new developments taking place in the suburbs are called suburbanization and depend on the activities of the city center. Suburbanization has resulted in more densely populated suburbs, where the population and vehicles are experiencing rapid growth without being matched by improvements in transport infrastructure. As a result, travel from the suburbs to the city center has increased, as well as housing demand. Local governments struggle to provide public transportation services and develop new networks. One way to control urban sprawl is to prioritize smarter growth models, especially through sustainable mobility systems, starting by increasing mass rapid transit. Singapore provides one of the most reliable public transportation systems in Southeast Asia through an extensive network of MRT, LRT, and buses that are comfortable, modern, safe, clean, easy to use, reliable, punctual, and well-integrated and is should serve as a benchmark.

Like killing two birds with one stone, developing a sustain-

able transportation system need to be pursued by the development of smart city investments to alleviate the pressure of rising urban population and optimize resources.

On a regional level, a more suitable development planning is also needed to push the agenda of regional integration towards a more sustainable and benefits-all coordination. One potential step to integrate ASEAN Countries is to enhance the connectivity between specific cities or province of countries across the ASEAN region such that it creates a regional value chain. The regional value chain, built by the chain of certain cities/provinces across ASEAN, aims to empower each part of the value chains by complementing each other's' advantage in terms of labor skills, input provisions, and supporting facilities. Several factors needs to takes place to ensure the creation of regional value chain not only comes to a realization but also creates a mutual benefit among parties. Firstly, institutional coordination of a multi-government context, in which the central and subnational level able to accommodate and implement the agenda. Involvement at early phase of subnational level government by the central government, to reflect ownership on a roadmap referring to province or cities that could be developed to fits a certain regional value chain. Secondly, prioritizing cities with a relatively similar stage of development. In addition, national government could provide support in terms of capacity building, technical and financial support to build the required expertise and know-how of subnational institutions.

The development and coordination of data collection and of a common smart city –including smarter infrastructure systems and mobility services- agenda across the ASEAN region could provide a robust leverage to drive the economy out of the crisis in an inclusive and sustainable way.

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