

**VIENTIANE STATEMENT ON EQUITY, ACCESS AND ENVIRONMENT: ADVANCING CLIMATE  
RESILIENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTINGS IN ASEAN**

1. We, the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam gathered for the ASEAN Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Forum in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 15 May, 2024.
2. We commend the leadership of the Lao People's Democratic Republic for advancing the ECCE agenda in the region by initiating the implementation of the **ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on ECCE in Southeast Asia (2023)** (hereinafter referred to as "Declaration") as Chair of ASEAN under the theme "ASEAN: Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience".
3. We acknowledge that the foundation of Early Childhood Care and Education's (ECCE) climate action must be the resolute commitment to core values such as sustainability, empathy, environmental stewardship, and intergenerational responsibility. In line with this, we recognise that by fostering these ideals in young learners, we will cultivate a culture of environmental concern and resilience for the next generation.
4. We emphasise ASEAN's commitment to **environment and climate actions** at all levels, to build a resilient and sustainable ASEAN community. Acknowledging the climate crisis's impact on children, especially those from the most vulnerable backgrounds, we strive to strengthen the capacity of all ASEAN Member States to integrate these considerations into ECCE planning and actions.
5. We reaffirm our commitments to accelerate the achievement of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 Agenda**, especially SDG target 4.2 We acknowledge that despite remarkable improvements in increasing access to early childhood education, disparities persist, underlining the need for concerted efforts to ensure equitable access to quality ECCE for all children, which is crucial for achieving the SDG 2030 agenda
6. We commit to realising the Declaration, focusing on the transition from ECCE to primary education, improving the ECCE quality and ECCE workforce, enhancing ECCE sector governance and partnerships, involving parents and caregivers in ECCE, promoting digital transformation in ECCE, and increasing financial investment in ECCE to ensure equitable access to quality ECCE services for all children in the ASEAN region.
7. We underscore the importance of working towards the implementation of the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Sustainable Resilience (2023) by actively promoting inclusive

sustainable resilience and ensuring that no one, including children, is left behind. This involves recognising their needs in disaster resilience and climate adaptation policies and strategies.

8. We underscore the importance of enhancing **policies that foster climate resilience, climate awareness and literacy, adaptation of system and risk-informed planning in ECCE**. To this end, we support ASEAN Member States to pursue existing and proposed country-specific solutions including the explored climate smart ECCE initiatives, and the optimisation of digital technology as an accelerator to materialise the effective implementation of policies and plans into actions whilst ensuring digital equity.
9. We underscore the significance of **research and data collection in ECCE**, in accordance with national laws, with a specific focus on climate resilience and environmental risks for young children, climate resilience and environmental sustainability. We stress the value of evidence-based decision-making and continuous monitoring and evaluation of ECCE programs. This entails the collection of data on child outcomes, learning environments, teacher effectiveness, and the incorporation of climate action.
10. We call for more concerted efforts to undertake continuing research, monitoring and evaluation to address the collective need for actions and measures on the sustainability of climate-related initiatives of ECCE.

**DO HEREBY:**

11. Call for the integration of climate literacy and climate action into the ECCE curriculum, in line with the Strategy for Strengthening Climate Community-based Action, acknowledging its crucial role in shaping the next generation's environmental consciousness. This involves empowering ECCE teachers and education administrators with the necessary tools and approaches to infuse climate-related topics into early childhood education effectively. By strengthening developmentally appropriate pedagogical methods, we aim to equip educators with the teaching skills to foster environmental stewardship. This includes enhancing professional development opportunities centred around environmental education, climate change, and innovative teaching approaches tailored specifically for instilling sustainability principles in early childhood education. We commit to exploring physical space and infrastructure-focused initiatives that provide safe, clean, healthy, sustainable and green spaces for care and learning.
12. Recognise **the critical role of parents, communities, and stakeholders in ECCE and climate action**, underscoring the need for motivating their active engagement. This involves providing parents with resources and learning opportunities to support their children's development at

home, as well as raising awareness and encouraging stakeholder involvement in creating supportive environments for quality ECCE and effective climate action.

13. Acknowledge the urgency to increasing public investment on ECCE and promoting **innovative financing for ECCE and mainstreaming ECCE into climate finance policies where suitable**. This approach aligns with our broader goal of promoting equitable access to quality early childhood care and education, which is fundamental for building a resilient ASEAN community prepared to face the challenges of climate change for sustainable development.
14. Emphasise the value of **cooperation and partnerships and multi-stakeholders partnerships** among related ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, international, regional, national and sub-national governments and organisations, civil society organisations, academia, private sector and ECCE foundations and networks, alongside strengthening their linkages with local communities. This, both in ECCE and broader settings, fosters leveraging resources, expertise and communication to accelerate the ASEAN actions in ECCE to build resilience and thereby achieve sustainable development in the ASEAN region.
15. Agree to develop a **Roadmap for the implementation of the ECCE Declaration** as stipulated in the said Declaration and **integrate environment and climate resilience issue into the Roadmap** to expedite the implementation through concrete activities and actions that will complement the workplans of the ASEAN education sector and other relevant Sectoral Bodies in line with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.
16. This Statement, reflecting our shared vision and commitment to advancing ECCE and integrating climate action within it, is issued with a call to all relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies and our partners to join in these efforts. Together, we will strive to build a resilient, sustainable, and inclusive future for all children in the ASEAN region.

Adopted in Vientiane, Lao PDR, on 15 May, 2024, at the conclusion of the ASEAN Forum on Ensuring Equal Access to Quality Early Childhood Care and Education.