

# Japan's Contribution to BHR in ASEAN

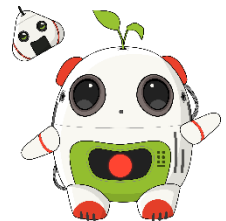
Kiya Masahiko, Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN

16 September 2025

ASEAN-Japan BHR Network Session

"Driving Responsible Business in ASEAN"

ESCAP room AP, Bangkok



# Outline

1. AICHR-Japan cooperation on BHR
2. Importance of BHR for ASEAN and Japan
3. Latest developments of BHR in ASEAN
4. Next Steps

# 1. AICHR-Japan cooperation on BHR

May 8 2015    1st AICHR-Japan Interface Meeting

- Identified 3 priority areas of cooperation; 9projects were implemented
- “ASEAN Enabling Master Plan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” was adopted at the 33<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Summit in 2018

Nov 8 2023    2nd AICHR-Japan Interface Meeting

- Decided Interface to be held on regular basis
- “Collaborate on human rights and support the work of AICHR” was included in Implementation Plan at the ASEAN-Japan 50<sup>th</sup> Year commemorative Summit in Dec 2023

May 22 2024    3rd AICHR-Japan Interface Meeting

- Identified priority Business and Human Rights as area for cooperation
- 1st BHR project was implemented in Sep 2024

May 13 2025    4th AICHR-Japan Interface Meeting

- Suggestions for formulating new projects with great social/economic impact in collaboration with relevant organizations
- 2nd BHR project was implemented in Jun 2025

# 11 projects were implemented with JAIF Support

	implemented	Project and Lead country	Actual Cost
1	Dec 2015	AICHR Regional Dialogue on the Mainstreaming of the <u>Rights of Persons with Disabilities</u> in ASEAN (Thailand)	USD 169,934.75
2	Aug 2016	AICHR Workshop on Effective Communication Strategies <u>to Combat Trafficking in Persons</u> (Vietnam)	USD 81,404.00
3	July 2016	2nd AICHR Regional Dialogue on the Mainstreaming of the <u>Rights of Persons with Disabilities</u> in the ASEAN Community (Thailand)	USD 178,182.00
4	Oct 2016	The AICHR Training Programme on <u>the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</u> (Thailand)	USD 89,293.50
5	Oct 2018	Task Force on the Mainstreaming of <u>the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</u> (Thailand)	USD 147,829.00
6	Jun 2017	3rd AICHR Regional Dialogue on the Mainstreaming of <u>the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</u> in the ASEAN Community (Thailand)	USD 149,578.00
7	Feb 2019	2018 AICHR Regional Dialogue (Accessibility through Universal Design)(Thailand)	USD 103,942.30
8	Dec 2019	2019 AICHR Regional Dialogue (Gender Perspectives on Disability Rights)(Thailand)	USD 136,920.00
9	Nov 2019	AICHR Workshop on Promoting Gender Equality and <u>Empowerment of Women</u> through ICTs towards Achieving the UN 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals (Vietnam)	USD 79,079.00
10	Sep 2024	AICHR, SEANF co-host regional workshop on sharing good practices, effective remedy for <u>migrant workers</u> (Thailand) ( <b>BHR project</b> )	closing process
11	Jun 2025	AICHR REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON GENDER LENS ERSPECTIVE ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN ASEAN,(Malaysia) ( <b>BHR project</b> )	closing process

# BHR projects by AICHR

	implemented	project title and outline	main donor
1	13-14 June 2014	Workshop on CSR and Human Rights in ASEAN: Outcomes of the AICHR Thematic Study, Singapore	UN agency
2	3-4 November 2016	AICHR Seminar on Promoting CSR and Human Rights in ASEAN, Singapore	EU, Sweden, UNDP
3	4-6 June 2018	AICHR Interregional Dialogue: Sharing Good Practices on Business and Human Rights, Bangkok	UN agency, EU, Arab League
4	10-11 June 2019	AICHR Interregional Dialogue: Sharing Good Practices on Business and Human Rights	Norway, Switzerland, Australia, UNDP, OECD, ILO
5	1-2 December 2020	The Essentials of Human Rights Due Diligence in Business: A Training for ASEAN Institutions, Bangkok(online)	UNDP
6	19-20 July 2022	AICHR Regional Dialogue: Sharing Good Practices on Business and Human Rights and Recovery from COVID-19 in ASEAN	UNDP, Australia
7	29-30 May 2023	AICHR Regional Consultation on Business and Human Rights, Environment and Climate Change, Kuala Lumpur	EU
8	1 June 2023	AICHR Regional Dialogue: Sharing Good Practices on the Business and Human Rights in ASEAN	UNDP, OECD
9	24 Sep 2024	AICHR, SEANF co-host regional workshop on sharing good practices, effective remedy for migrant workers, Bangkok	Japan (JAIF)
10	30 June-1 July 2025	AICHR REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON GENDER LENS PERSPECTIVE ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN ASEAN, Kuala Lumpur	Japan (JAIF)
11	21-22 July 2025	Regional Dialogue on Responsible Business and Migration in ASEAN, Bangkok	Australia, IOM, OHCHR, IJM

# First JAIF-supported project on BHR (Sep 2024)



photo provided by AICHR Thailand



photo provided by AICHR Thailand

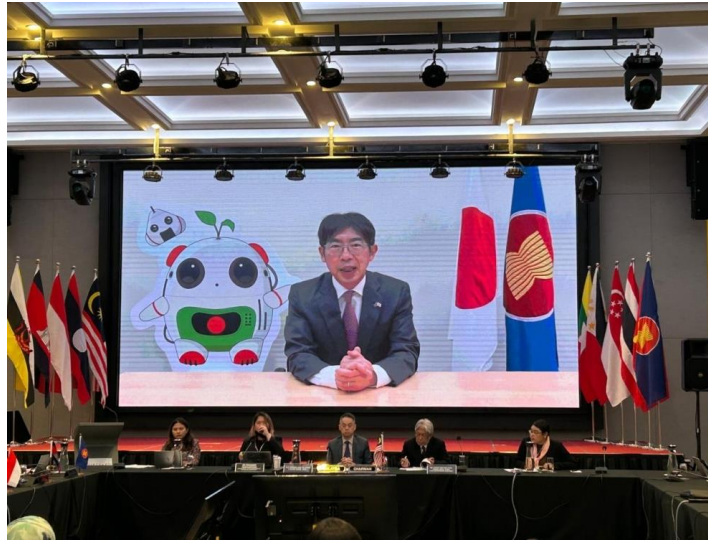


photo provided by AICHR Thailand

**AICHR, SEANF co-host regional workshop on sharing good practices, effective remedy  
for migrant workers**

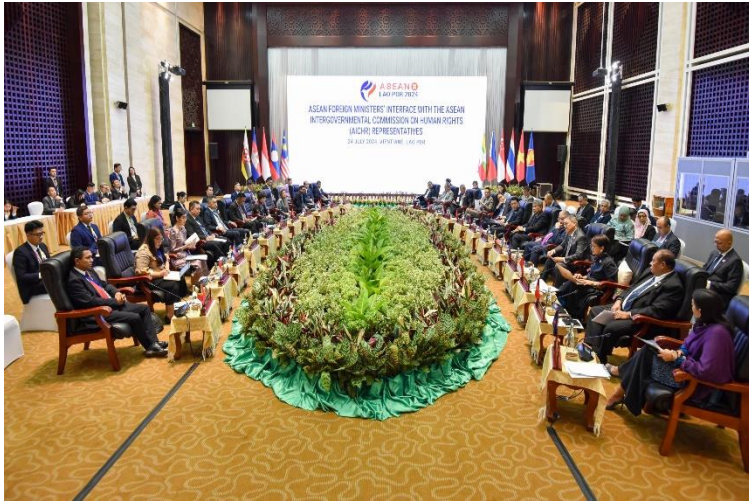


# Second JAIF-supported project on BHR (Jun 2025)



**AICHR REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON GENDER LENS PERSPECTIVE  
ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN ASEAN, Kuala Lumpur**

# AICHR reported an AICHR–Japan Cooperation to FMM



AICHR – ASEAN Foreign Ministers interface 2024 (AICHR website)



AICHR – ASEAN Foreign Ministers interface 2025 (AICHR website)

## 4.3.5 Japan

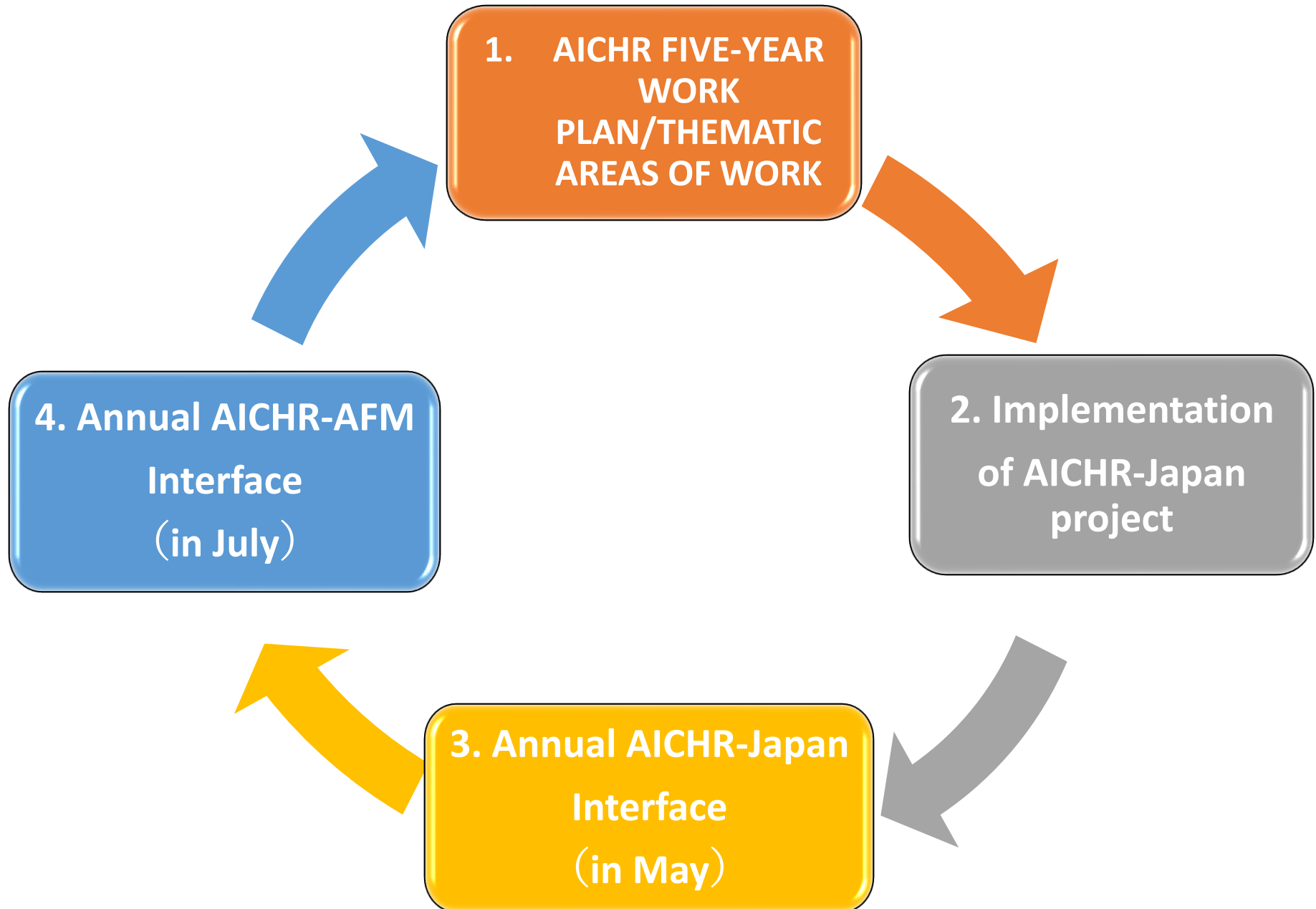
On 8 November 2023, AICHR met with Japan at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, Indonesia to discuss further possible areas of future cooperation in line with the framework of the AICHR FYWP 2021-2025 and the Priority Programmes/Activities of AICHR 2024, as well as contribute to the ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation marked by the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit for the 50<sup>th</sup> Year of the ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation to take place in December 2023. It was noted that priority areas of cooperation were identified since the first meeting between AICHR and Japan in 2015, including (i) the rights of persons with disabilities, (ii) empowerment of women, and (iii) fight against trafficking in persons. From 2015 to 2019, Japan supported nine AICHR activities for the development and implementation of the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025. The Meeting took note of suggestions for further cooperation which may include (i) interface meeting between AICHR and Japan to be held on a regular basis; and (ii) new thematic and priority areas of cooperation to be explored for 2024 and beyond aiming for the enhancement of the strategic partnership across all sectors including human rights.

On 22 May 2024, AICHR held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Interface Meeting with Japan to discuss possible cooperation between Japan and AICHR in realising the AICHR FYWP 2021-2025, as well as in the Joint Statement and Implementation Plan, which were adopted in the Commemorative Summit for the 50<sup>th</sup> Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. AICHR and Japan exchanged views on the recent development and future direction and shared the view to deepen cooperation, such as in the area of business and human rights, among others.

AICHR Annual report 2024



# AICHR-Japan cooperation cycle



## 2. Importance of BHR for ASEAN and Japan

### ① Economic Perspective

- Strengthening Global Supply Chains
- Improving of Investment Environment

### ② Social Perspective

- Protecting Workers' Rights
- Contributing Local Communities

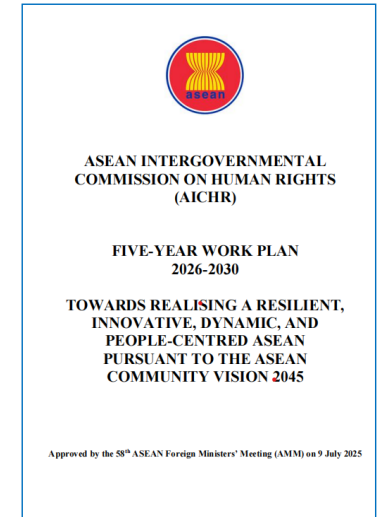
### ③ Legal and Ethical Perspective

- Promoting International Standards
- Promoting Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

### 3. Latest developments of BHR in ASEAN

#### ① Adoption of **AICHR FIVE YEAR WORK PLAN (2026-2030)**

- Projects concerning BHR are explicitly stated. Even now, BHR remains a high priority for AICHR.



#### ② Impact of **Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) Laws in Non-ASEAN Countries to ASEAN**

- Mandatory HRDD laws emerging, especially in Europe
- Outside Europe, similar legal frameworks under discussion in AU, ROK, Thai
- Other laws impose supply chain DD indirectly (e.g. mandatory reporting, import bans on forced labor)
- ASEAN companies, central to global supply chains, increasingly impacted

# HRDD in Non-ASEAN Countries

	Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
<b>Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)</b>	Mandatory DD	• <b>Dec 30</b> – EUDR enforcement starts applying to large companies	• <b>Jun 30</b> – EUDR enforcement starts applying to SMEs			
<b>Battery Regulation</b>	Mandatory DD		• <b>Jul 26</b> – Battery guidelines due (EU Commission)	• <b>Aug 18</b> – Battery DD obligations starts applying		
<b>Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD)</b>	Mandatory DD		• <b>Jul 26</b> – CSDDD guidelines due (EU Commission)	• <b>Jul 26</b> – – CSDDD transposition into national laws due –CSDDD guidelines due (e.g. climate transition plan)	• <b>Jul 26</b> – CSDDD starts applying to large companies	• <b>Jul 26</b> – CSDDD starts applying to medium-large companies
<b>Forced Labor Regulation (FLR)</b>	No Mandatory DD or Reporting			• <b>Jun 14</b> –FLR guidelines due (EU Commission) • <b>Dec 14</b> – FLR starts applying		



# Initiative on BHR by GOJ

	Year	Initiatives
1	2011	UN formulated "Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights"
2	2014	METI published guidelines on "Human Rights Due Diligence."
3	2018	GOJ began preparations for drafting a National Action Plan (NAP)
4	2020	GOJ formulated the "National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP)," ①Protect and promote human rights throughout society, including the international community ②Ensure and enhance the international competitiveness and sustainability of Japanese companies ③Contribution to the achievement of the SDGs, etc.
5	2021	MOFA published "Case Studies of Business and Human Rights Initiatives"
6	2022	GOJ formulated "Guidelines on Respect for Human Rights in Responsible Supply Chains"
7	2023	METI published Practical Reference Material "Guidelines on Respect for Human Rights in Responsible Supply Chains"
8	2023	MAFF published "Guidebook for Respecting Human Rights in Food Enterprises"
9	2023	MHLW published Check Book "Business and Human Rights in labor "
10	2023	METI started to hold a seminar for promoting respect for Human Rights in supply chains, etc. for small and medium-sized enterprises.
11	2025	GOJ is scheduled to announce the revised NAP.

# BHR project by UNDP through GOJ budget

- UNDP and the GOJ in support of the implementation of the UNGP's on Business + Human Rights

- Outline of the project;

- Supporting the **implementation of the UN Guiding Principles(UNGPs)** in target countries, including ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia)
- Promoting efforts to achieve **responsible corporate activity** in target countries by assisting these governments for developing **National Action Plans** and sharing **insights on “BHR”**
- Supporting JP companies operating in target countries to engage in responsible business

- Main outcome of the project (List only ASEAN countries) ;

- **Vietnam** formulated its NAP July 2023, followed by **Indonesia** September of the same year.
- In September 2023, **Laos** created a roadmap for formulating its NAP.



## 4. Next Steps for ASEAN-Japan cooperation on BHR

To **formulate** new projects of  
**Business and Human Rights in ASEAN**



- With great **social/economic impact**
- In line with the **AICHR FIVE-YEAR WORK PLAN (2026-2030)**
- Analysis of the **Impact of Human Rights Due Diligence Laws in Non-ASEAN Countries** to ASEAN
- Collaborating with **relevant organizations** and **framework** to make use of their knowledge and network

# Thank you for your attention

