



**TITLE: ABAC-Malaysia Leads The First Pilot Run of the ASEAN Mentorship Project**  
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The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Business Advisory Council (BAC)-Malaysia and the SME Corporation takes the lead in organising the pilot run of the ASEAN Mentorship for Entrepreneurs Network (or AMEN) Project on 20 August 2019 at Brickfields Asia College, PJ Campus located in Jalan Utara, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia.

The ASEAN Mentorship Entrepreneurs Network (AMEN) is the Philippines' flagship project in the ASEAN Economic Community conceived by the Philippine Presidential Adviser for Entrepreneurship and ASEAN BAC-PH Chair Joey Concepcion as a potent tool that ASEAN could optimize to boost the development of micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) in the region.

In partnership with the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (ACCMSME), which represents the governments of the ASEAN member states (AMS), ASEAN BAC officially began the AMEN Project in March 2019 with the support of the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (or JAIF). Among the deliverables of the project are the AMEN modular curriculum and framework for the training of AMEN mentors. The AMEN Project also assembles the pool of duly certified mentors who will be mobilized across the ASEAN region with the goal of ultimately leveraging on micro- and small enterprises (MSEs) as agents of inclusive growth and prosperity by facilitating their access to the 3Ms (i.e., Mentorship, Money and Market).

The AMEN mentorship activities across the region will be managed through the ASEAN Mentorship Institute (AMI). Led by ASEAN BAC, this Institute will serve as the virtual repository for AMEN modules as well as oversee the selection, certification, deployment and continuing development of the AMEN mentors with the support of its partners across ASEAN, which include Malaysia's SME Corporation and Brickfields Asia College.

Meanwhile, the AMEN mentorship modules recently formulated by the project team will be presented during the upcoming pilot run. Over 80 stakeholders made up of representatives of the ASEAN member-states (AMS), industry players (also known as "big brothers"), mentors, mentees,

consultants and guests will take part in the workshop and discussion on the composition of the AMEN modular curriculum for the purpose of validating the relevance and effectiveness of each of the modules. A welcome highlight to cap the day's activity is the "Entrepreneurship Masterclass" session by Mr. Raja Singham, a member of the ASEAN BAC-Malaysia and the Co-Founder/Managing Director of the BAC Education Group.

AMEN formally commenced in Manila in November 2017 and has since been launched in Australia, South Korea, Singapore and Thailand. *"AMEN will put to good use the valuable assets that long have been available in the ASEAN region and direct them towards the implementation of a practical and useful mentorship program that will really benefit our MSEs. I'm talking about the government resources allotted for MSME development, the existing capacity building institutions that are in place, and the growing sense of volunteerism among mentors, trainers and coaches, among others. The AMEN will enable MSEs to tap medium and large enterprises as their markets and to access the additional capital they require for further growing their businesses," Mr. Concepcion said.*

The Pilot Run of ASEAN Mentorship for MSEs in Malaysia will shortly be replicated in Indonesia and the Philippines so as to finalize the AMEN modules that will then be used in the mentorship sessions to be conducted in all ten ASEAN member states.

Through AMEN, ASEAN-BAC will supplement business knowledge and acumen of entrepreneurs, whatever their level or the size of their businesses. More importantly, ASEAN BAC will take a more active role as the government's partner in all the ASEAN member states in concretely developing the MSMEs of the region.

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