

ASEAN SOGIE CAUCUS

2022
ANNUAL
REPORT



ASEAN SOGIE
CAUCUS



About ASC

VISION

An ASEAN Community that respects the human rights of all people regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC).

MISSION

ASC is a regional network that dynamically engages diverse actors to collectively advocate for the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer people, non-binary and gender-diverse persons in Southeast Asia.

GOALS

ASC works towards the following goals:

- All human rights mechanisms impacting the ASEAN region adopt and implement frameworks and plans of action that promote and protect the rights of LGBTIQ, non-binary, and gender-diverse persons.
- Domestic laws, policies, and programs in Southeast Asian countries include the protection and promotion of the rights of LGBTIQ, non-binary and gender-diverse persons.
- LGBTIQ, non-binary, and gender-diverse civil society are empowered to engage state and non-state actors to adhere to human rights standards.

History of ASC

ASEAN SOGIE Caucus (ASC) is a network of human rights activists from Southeast Asia that works for the inclusion of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) into the human rights work in ASEAN. Advocating for the human rights of all persons regardless of SOGIESC is at the heart of ASC's mission.

Our roots go back to the courageous action of activists from eight (8) ASEAN countries, namely Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Our founders ensured the visibility and meaningful engagement of LGBTIQ voices in ASEAN civil society spaces, especially the annual ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ ASEAN People's Forum (ACSC/APF). Since 2010, our founders ensured that LGBTIQ issues are addressed in the ASEAN civil society actions and recommendations reflected in outcome documents.

In 2011, ASC was formally established during a meeting of LGBTIQ activists held in Jakarta, Indonesia in preparation for the ACSC/APF of that year. This meeting was organized jointly by Arus Pelangi, Indonesia for Humans, and iSEE. ASC recognizes that its birth and evolution occurred alongside the expanding spaces for regional civil society's engagement with ASEAN.

In 2014, ASC began setting up its Secretariat in Quezon City, Philippines and eventually gained legal registration as a non-stock, non-profit organization the following year. Since then, we have pushed for LGBTIQ human rights through engagements in civil society platforms and human rights mechanisms; supported local LGBTIQ activists through mentorship, technical assistance, and relationship-building; and reimagined activism as a creative process anchored on a vision of South-South solidarity.

In 2021, ASC was granted a Special Consultative Status by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Foreword

With great humility and excitement, I am thankful for the opportunity to contribute to the 2022 ASC Annual Report, sharing my heartfelt perspective as the ASC Chair.

2011 was the year the ASEAN SOGIESC Caucus (ASC) was formally established. But the spark started in 2008.

2008 was the year when, together with a motley crew of crazy LGBTIQ activists, participated in the ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC)/ASEAN Peoples Forum (APF) held in Jakarta, Indonesia. We just had one goal – to have sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) language included in the final list of recommendations for the conference. We jubilantly prevailed and since then, this has been the norm in all ASEAN civil society declarations. Of course, the rainbow flag was flying everywhere in the venue as we claim the ACSC/APF as a safe space to do our LGBTIQ rights advocacy.

We aimed bigger while we continued working together remotely since we all work in different Southeast Asian countries. This was to have the rights of all people, regardless of SOGIESC, be included in the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD). Knowing how some ASEAN member-states have been aggressively opposing our initiative, we know the big possibility of failing. In 2012 the AHRD was adopted without SOGIESC. This further ignited the spark that turned into a flame.

That flame, I am proud to say, has continued burning ever so brightly as we continue that same goal we had back in 2008.

In the ASC 2022 report, you will read how we successfully continue our focused work on the projects we have embarked on. It has been a journey filled with warmth and inspiration as we, the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, collectively continue to dedicate ourselves to creating a more inclusive Southeast Asia. Our path has been illuminated by the hope we've kindled, the lives we've touched, and the lasting change we've ignited.

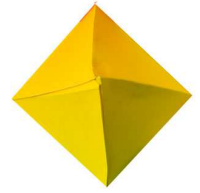
As Chairperson of ASC, I've been profoundly moved by the dedication and resilience of our team. I am exceptionally proud of our diverse and passionate ASC team, headed by our Executive Director, Ryan Silverio. Together, we've been unwavering in our mission to champion the rights and well-being of the LGBTIQ+ community across Southeast Asia.

Looking ahead, I envision an even brighter future for ASC, where our organization stands side by side with all peoples in and beyond Southeast Asia, weaving a tapestry of warmth and solidarity, where everyone can live authentically, unburdened by discrimination and prejudice.

While we continue to hurdle through the opposition from ASEAN as we experienced back in 2012, may we continue to live lives with the power to illuminate the lives of countless individuals and inspire transformative change on an even grander scale.

Believe. Never give up. Padayon!

Ging Cristobal, Chairperson, ASEAN SOGIE Caucus



RAINBOW REACH OUT

Supporting capacities and sustainability of local LGBTIQ organizations

In the earlier part of 2022, the grip of the COVID-19 pandemic persisted in the region, marked by the emergence of new variants of varying levels of severity. As more individuals became fully vaccinated against the virus, a glimmer of relief appeared. Quarantine measures and travel restrictions have begun to ease, allowing for the resumption of daily normal activities on the streets while also being mindful of safety precautions as the virus has likewise become part of daily life.

Consequently, many organizations have begun to hold hybrid convenings—that is, the conduct of on-site events which participants can opt to join in-person or online. This is what has become the “new normal”—the simultaneous use of offline and online platforms in advocacy work. However, even with the decline of mobility restriction, and the gradual reopening of offline spaces for campaigns and advocacy, grassroots LGBTIQ groups struggle to recover from the damage the pandemic has wrought. Concerns continue regarding the health and well-being of their members, the sustainability of their organizations, and the ongoing challenges of meeting the survival needs of their communities. ASC, with its mandate to support local LGBTIQ groups in the ASEAN, collaborated with these organizations so they can carry out their post-COVID-19 recovery initiatives in their respective communities.

Rainbow Reach Out Program

Continuing on from the previous year, ASC carried the **Rainbow Reach Out Program** well into 2022 to support local LGBTIQ organizations through various purposes, namely, the organizations’ operational costs, the mental health and well-being of LGBTIQ activists in the province, as well as the provision of dignity packs, food supplies, as well as honoraria for officers and volunteers who lost their main sources of income during in the pandemic.

- Bisdak Pride – The organization is based in Cebu Province, Philippines.
- MUJER LGBT – The organization is based in Zamboanga City, Philippines.
- Transmen Indonesia – The organization is based in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, but has members from different provinces in the country.
- San Julian Pride – an organization that empowers LGBTIQ persons in rural areas in Eastern Samar, Philippines.

ASEAN Queer Leadership Exchange

One notable issue that surfaced during the pandemic is the significance of mental health and well-being. It underscored how mental and emotional resilience plays a crucial role in the ability of individuals to navigate and overcome crisis. To facilitate resilience-building among LGBTIQ activists, ASC led the **ASEAN Queer Leadership Exchange**. This program was conceptualized to equip LGBTIQ activists with advanced resources for transformative leadership amid political and economic challenges in ASEAN member-states and to cultivate Reflexive Leadership among activist leaders, which was identified as an essential skill through prior focus group discussions.

This gave rise to a series of online learning workshops entitled, **“Sustaining B.O.L.D. Leadership by Developing Reflexivity”**. The program was facilitated by Elizha Corpus of Elizha Corpus Consulting and tapped into the expertise of ASC Board Members, local activists, and ASEAN partners. The online sessions ensured the meaningful participation of participants with visual and hearing impairment with support from TERCAP for sign language and closed captioning, along with Thai and Bahasa Indonesia interpreters for participants who are more comfortable in the aforementioned languages. The B.O.L.D. Leadership program, held from September 19 to October 17, 2022, drew around 80 unique attendees from various ASEAN countries, including individuals not formally affiliated with LGBTQIA+ groups.

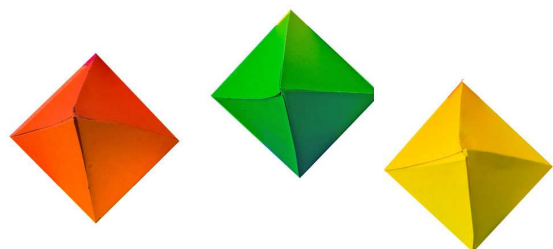
B.O.L.D. Leadership

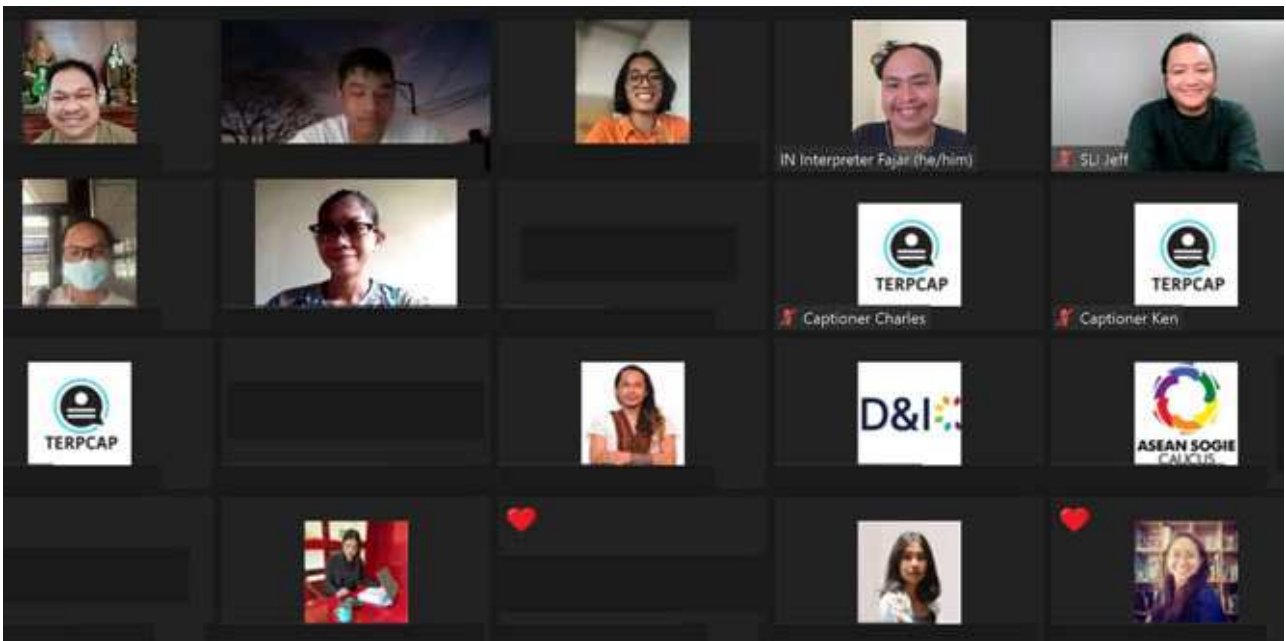
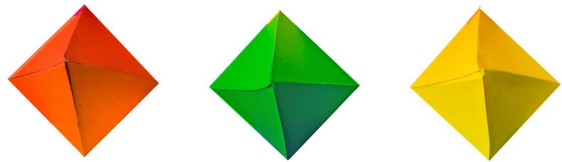
Build self-awareness and clarify one’s purpose.

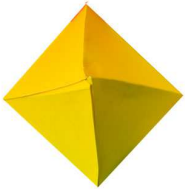
Own one’s well-being and discover practices that can be infused in one’s daily routines.

Lead with accountability.

Develop continuously as one adapts to the challenges that come their way.







South-South Solidarity

Creating spaces for cross-movement and intersectional LGBTIQ advocacies

ASC strongly believes in cultivating the regional landscape toward cross-movement and intersectional LGBTIQ advocacies, especially within the ASEAN region, where cultural, social, and legal contexts vary. Presenting a united front with intersectional perspectives enhances people of diverse SOGIESC's legitimacy and influence in advocating for policy changes at the regional level, navigating the complexities of diverse political backdrops within ASEAN countries, and communicating the impacts of humanitarian crises they are disproportionately affected by. By promoting visibility and representation, the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus ensures that the voices from the margins are surfaced, contributing to a more accurate representation of the diverse ASEAN community.

Forging Intersectional Feminist Futures (FIFF)

The Forging Intersectional Feminist Futures (FIFF) is a collaborative effort led by ASC and regional organizations such as IWRAW-AP, Asia Indigenous Peoples' Pact, Asia-Pacific Refugee Rights Network, Asia Pacific Transgender Network, Asia-Pacific Network of Sex Workers, International Drug Policy Consortium, and Special Talent Exchange Program (STEP) to promote intersectional praxis among civil society across Asia. It aims to achieve systemic gender equality in Asia by strengthening intersectional movement-building, which is key in developing transformative advocacy strategies that center on the voices and lived experiences of diverse groups of marginalized women and that challenge multiple systems of oppression.

ASC plays a pivotal role in leading activities in the Philippines and overseeing regional communications. This initiative spans Cambodia, Indonesia, India, the Philippines,

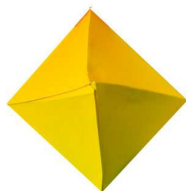


and Pakistan. Being part of this consortium itself positions ASC as one of the leading advocates for intersectionality.

In 2022, the Opening Partnership Dialogue for Philippine partners saw 16 organizations officially expressing their interest, with discussions focusing on understanding the initiative's objectives, entry points for participation, and intersectional praxis insights. Overall, the FIFF project is making strides in fostering solidarity and empowering diverse groups of marginalized women in the pursuit of systemic gender equality in Asia.

In July 2022, ASC collaborated with the organizations advancing the rights of persons with disabilities such as Nationwide Organization of Visually-IMpaired Empowered Ladies (NOVEL), and TERPCAP, to celebrate the disability pride month. Two webinars were conducted: "Intersectionality of Disability and Gender", and "Making the Digital World Disability-Inclusive and Accessible". By collaborating with groups led by persons with disabilities, ASC became more reflexive with regards its approaches and way of working to ensure these are inclusive, and do not perpetuate ableism.





Country-Specific Responses

In light of challenging circumstances in the region, ASC initiated the following solidarity measures to support LGBTIQ activism amid adversity:

Indonesia

In March 2022, ASC and various civil society organizations (CSOs) led the advocacy efforts in response to the local ordinance of Bogor, Indonesia that legitimizes change practices against LGBTQIA+ persons. ASC spearheaded the drafting of a joint statement signed by 140 local organizations in Indonesia, organized advocacy meetings together with the National Human Rights Commission (KOMNASHAM), and drafted the communications sent to UN Special Procedures and AICHR.¹

ASC was also actively engaged in advocacy to express concerns over Indonesia's legislation of new penal code which criminalizes sexual relations outside marriage, and curtails freedom of speech and expression. Various joint statements were issued with the broader civil society in Indonesia as well as in the region. In July 2022, ASC co-drafted joint statements urging the government to repeal all the problematic provisions that endanger fundamental freedom in Indonesia.



Philippines

Statements of concern were co-drafted together with various local LGBTQIA+ organizations. First was concerning the murder of a gender-diverse high school student in Tawi-tawi. Ironically, the murder took place on May 17, 2022, on the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT).

Further, on August 30, ASC enjoined CSOs calling out the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) on the Gender-based Discriminatory Policies in Basic and Higher Education and urged these institutions to respect students' lived name, gender identity, and expression. The resumption of face-to-face classes also resumed discriminatory practices such as deadnaming and forced short haircuts, uniforms, and behavior, impinging on the right of transgender girls/

¹ ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, 2022. "Local Regulation of Bogor City, Indonesia No. 10 of 2021 on Prevention and Countermeasures of Sexual Deviant Behavior: Human Rights Violations," 19 March 2022. Retrieved from <https://aseansogiecaucus.org/statements/asc-statements/185-local-regulation-of-bogor-city-indonesia-no-10-of-2021-on-prevention-and-countermeasures-of-sexual-deviant-behavior-human-rights-violations>.

women, transgender boys/men and gender-diverse learners to safe, gender-inclusive basic education, free from gender-based violence and harmful stereotypes.

Myanmar

In observance of the anniversary of the military junta's unjust seizure of Myanmar's democracy and as an affirmation of the LGBTQIA+ movement's solidarity with pro-democracy efforts in the country, ASC, together with more than 60 organizations, issued a regional statement last February 1, 2022.² The following is an excerpt from the statement:

"We urge ASEAN, especially the government of Cambodia in its capacity as the Chair of the regional bloc, to fully implement its Five-Point Consensus on Myanmar: immediate cessation of violence, constructive dialogue with all stakeholders especially marginalized and ethnic groups who are excluded from political processes, provision of humanitarian assistance, and the appointment and unhindered visits of an ASEAN Special Envoy to facilitate constructive dialogues with all stakeholders."

At the ASEAN Civil Society Conference / ASEAN Peoples' Forum 2022 in Cambodia, ASC took the lead in issuing a solidarity message for the Myanmar people, expressing people with diverse identities in Southeast Asia standing in solidarity with the people of Myanmar.³



Malaysia

In Malaysia, along with 66 CSOs, ASC and ILGA Asia issued a joint statement denouncing the REXKL Halloween raid conducted by the Malaysian police and Islamic law authorities on October 29, which detained and interrogated at least 24 LGBTQI persons. ASC and Justice for Sisters also submitted an urgent communication to the AICHR and Malaysia representative to the AICHR.

² ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, 2022. "One Year after the Illegitimate Military Coup in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar: Joint LGBTQI+ Civil Society Statement," 1 February 2022. Retrieved from <https://aseansogiecaucus.org/statements/asc-statements/184-one-year-after-the-illegitimate-military-coup-in-the-republic-of-the-union-of-myanmar-joint-lgbtiq-civil-society-statement>.

³ ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, 2022. "ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum 2022 Solidarity Message for Myanmar," 5 November 2022. <https://aseansogiecaucus.org/statements/asc-statements/193-asean-civil-society-conference-asean-peoples-forum-2022-solidarity-message-for-myanmar>.

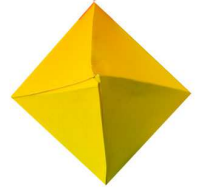
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ASEAN SOGIE CAUCUS (ASC) has always been one of our valued regional partners for us, Non-binary Thailand, despite we are just a small grassroots non-binary led group. However, we are growing fast due to more young people are coming out as non-binary. ASC has been supporting our initiative to promote non-binary solidarity beyond Thailand, but across SEA. This is very important when we (Non-binary Thailand) organize our movement; it's not just for non-binary people in Thailand but for enbies (slang for non-binary) across SEA. ASC is the only regional CSO that helps us fosters the regional solidarity. With the rise of anti-queer rights movement, it's vital to look out for each other and foster a safe space with fellow enbies across SEA.

My wish for ASC is to see ASC promote intersectional queer movements that includes the voices of queer informal, migrant workers and disable queers. I hope to see ASC could facilitate the non-binary movement/solidarity across SEA. Furthermore, I wish to see ASC has more staff based in Inland SEA too, so that ASC could support more queer activists in inland SEA where civic spaces are shrinking.

Bloom Siriwattakanon (they/he),
International Relations Unit Head,
Non-binary Thailand



Queering ASEAN Civil Society

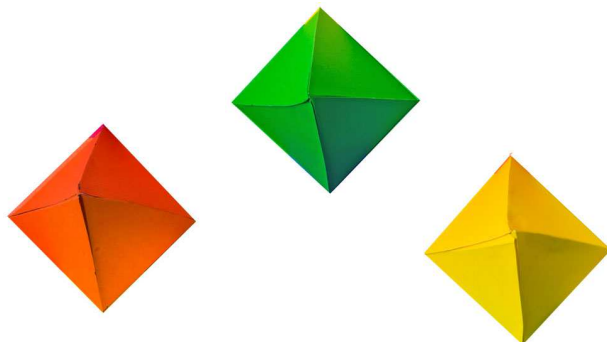
ASEAN human rights mechanisms failed to show substantial progress in upholding LGBTIQ human rights. Despite this, we have witnessed great strides made among civil society allies in ensuring that the advocacy agenda and political spaces remain inclusive for individuals with diverse SOGIESC. ASC continues to forge connections with civil society organizations, seeking avenues to synergize efforts aimed at fostering a more inclusive ASEAN for all.

Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR)

Supported by Women Fund Asia through Leading From the South (LFS) grants, ASC undertook an initiative to enhance the capacity of grassroots organizations in evidence-based advocacy using feminist participatory research. Beginning with a virtual learning session in June 2022 led by Dr. Tesa Casal de Vela of the Women and Gender Institute (WAGI) - Miriam College (based in Quezon City, Philippines), the ASC Secretariat gained insights into feminist research methodology, ethical considerations, and practical research methods. This session primed ASC staff for a regional project supporting local LGBTQIA+ advocates in undertaking feminist participatory action research.



From October to November 2022, ASC organized a three (3)-day virtual workshops facilitated by Prof. Lorna Israel, Department of International Studies of Miriam College, on the introduction of the feminist research methodology, involving 16 representatives from partner organizations: Legal Dignity (Malaysia), JTID (Indonesia), Arcoiris (Timor Leste), and GALANG Philippines (Philippines). Simultaneously, a researcher was hired to conduct a scoping study mapping LGBTIQ and SOGIESC-inclusive studies in Southeast Asia, focusing on Indonesia, Malaysia, Timor Leste, the Philippines, Laos, and Cambodia. This study, expected to conclude by January 2023, will serve as a baseline for developing research agendas under the project and guiding future research efforts.



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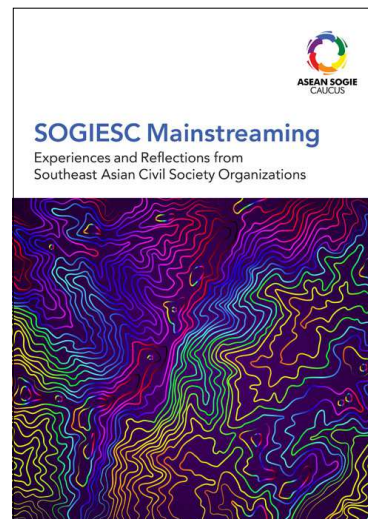
ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, as a regional organisation that focuses on advancing the rights of the LGBTQ+ community in Southeast Asia, plays a crucial role in advocating for greater inclusivity and protection of the rights of sexual and gender minority individuals in the ASEAN region. Legal Dignity is a direct beneficiary of the work that is being done by ASC. They provided us with a platform for networking, collaboration among activists in the region, and raising awareness about the work that our organisation is working on, thereby strengthening the collective efforts to combat discrimination and promote inclusivity for LGBTIQ persons in Malaysia. They have also helped strengthen our organisational capacity by virtue of our partnership in generating evidence to increase efficiency in our advocacy, vis-à-vis feminist participatory action research. ASC work aligns with the principles of equality, non-discrimination, and human rights, which are important values in today's world. Support for organisations like the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus is essential for the progress of LGBTQ+ rights and social acceptance across countries in Southeast Asia, in particular. We sincerely wish for the instrumental work of ASC in bringing positive change to the region.

We sincerely wish for the instrumental work of ASC in bringing positive change to the region will be continued.

Andi Suraidah,
Founding Director, Legal Dignity

SOGIESC Mainstreaming: Experiences and Reflections from Southeast Asian Civil Society Organizations

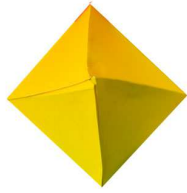
ASC's report titled **"SOGIESC Mainstreaming: Experiences and Reflections from Southeast Asian Civil Society Organizations"** provides insights into how non-LGBTQIA+ organizations have done work on SOGIESC. The report entailed qualitative data from six (6) CSOs, all of which have collaborated or partnered or engaged ASC in regional settings. The report gives an overview of the levels of SOGIESC inclusion within the organizations, the factors that facilitate the integration into the work of non-LGBTIQ regional CSOs within ASEAN, and the needs of these CSOs to strengthen their work on LGBTIQ human rights concerns. Furthermore, the report underscored the significant impacts of mainstreaming SOGIESC into the organization's work, such as getting a wider reach for advocacy across sectors, the transformation toward a more inclusive organization, and a noticeable increase of awareness of SOGIESC concepts and issues within and outside the organization. Moving forward, the report outlined some recommendations to strengthen the integration of SOGIESC issues within non-LGBTQIA+ focused organizations. ⁴



Some recommendations from the Research titled "SOGIESC Mainstreaming: Experiences and Reflections from Southeast Asian Civil Society Organizations"

- LGBTQIA+ representation and leadership in the organizational structure and composition;
- Sustainable and strategic partnerships by CSOs that can further support, and protect the LGBTQIA+ organizations;
- Awareness campaigns and capacity-building programs on SOGIESC concepts, issues, and relevant international human rights instruments or agreements;
- Younger people engaged in the advocacy, in the ASEAN mechanisms, and in their respective organizations;
- Mainstreaming SOGIESC concepts and issues in plans, programs and enabling mechanisms of the CSOs through organizational policies to institutionalize them; and
- Strengthen safety and protection for LGBTQIA+ persons within the organizations, including providing access to facilities for LGBTQIA+ survivors of discrimination and violence.

⁴ ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, 2022. "SOGIESC Mainstreaming: Experiences and Reflection from Southeast Asian Civil Society Organizations," 13 January 2023. Retrieved from <https://aseansogiecaucus.org/news/asc-news/197-sogiesc-mainstreaming>.



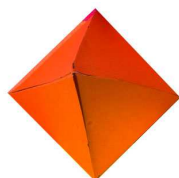
Queering Narratives

Leveraging the power of arts and culture in advancing LGBTQIA+ rights

ASC values the power of arts as a strategic tool to advocate for LGBTQ human rights. Leveraging arts allows for tailoring messages to diverse cultural contours of the region, enhancing acceptance and resonance, and establishing a profound emotional connection with audiences. Art is a powerful means to challenge stereotypes and debunk myths surrounding LGBTQ individuals and provides a platform for inclusivity by involving LGBTQ artists and allowing them to tell their stories, the lived experiences of those relegated to the margins, illustrating the impact of discriminatory policies, and mobilizing public support for legal reforms.

Tulipa

ASC supported the production of the film *Tulipa* (Eng. Tulip) directed by Filipino filmmaker and LGBT activist Rhadem Musawah. The narrative unfolds the story of Filipino LGBT migrants who found a safe space in the Netherlands to assert their rights to gender equality. Through personal experiences, the film shares stories of survival, hope, and the ongoing challenges faced by the LGBT community in the Philippines and the significance of creating an inclusive and secure Philippines for gender-marginalized groups. Around 30-minutes long, *Tulipa* was first premiered in Amsterdam, Netherlands.





Over the past 6-7 years, the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus (ASC) has played a crucial role in empowering and giving a voice to the indigenous and Muslim LGBT+ individuals residing in the conflict-ridden areas of Mindanao. Through our partnership with ASC, we have not only worked towards safeguarding the human rights and healthcare of the LGBT+ community but also implemented programs to support them during disasters and assist them in overcoming challenges.

ASC has been indispensable in ensuring the safety and protection of LGBT+ rights defenders in key regions of Mindanao. They have fought against attacks and advocated for policies that promote inclusivity at both local and regional levels. Their tireless efforts have been instrumental in advocating for the rights and well-being of the LGBT+ community.

Looking ahead, we hope that ASC continues to extend its support to communities across ASEAN who lack representation and a platform within the equality movement. Their expertise and dedication can provide a much-needed voice to marginalized groups and help champion their rights in other regions like Mindanao.

We express our gratitude to ASC for their invaluable collaboration and eagerly anticipate their continued assistance in navigating the journey towards equality for all.

Rhadem Musawah, Independent Film Director
and Board Member, MUJER LGBT

Epiphania Visuals

Epiphania Visuals, the world's first A-Spec queer art space working in the field of fine arts & films with a special focus on gender equality, and asexuality, held a three (3)-month-long exhibition, featuring photographs and experiences taken for ANOQA's petition for IDAHOBIT. ASC supported this exhibit by amplifying the key messages around asexual visibility and gave a presentation during one of their sessions.



“ANOQA is immensely grateful for the invaluable contributions of the Asian SOGIE Caucus (ASC) in championing the rights and visibility of diverse SOGIE communities throughout Asia.

ASC has emerged as a vital ally in ANOQA's mission to foster asexual and aromatic inclusivity within the region, standing firmly by us in our campaign for IDAHOBITA.

As ANOQA is one the most underfunded organizations in Asia, ASC, led by the exceptional guidance of Ryan Silverio, has been instrumental in helping ANOQA achieve financial stability and sustainability.

The collaboration with ASC has not only strengthened our collective efforts but has also significantly advanced the cause of acceptance and respect for all sexual orientations and gender identities. ASC's support has been unconditional in amplifying the voice of Asexual Pride Asia and challenging stereotypes, paving the way for a more inclusive society. As we look ahead, ANOQA is optimistic that ASC will continue to prosper, extending its influence and furthering the cause of SOGIE communities across Asia, serving as a steadfast beacon of solidarity and advocacy. “

Dipa Mahbuba Yasmin, Founder, Asia Network of A-Spec Queer Activists (ANOQA)

Hear Queer Stories

Hear Queer Stories is ASC's podcast platform, dedicated to amplifying and celebrating LGBTIQ narratives from Southeast Asia since 2020. In 2022, ASC collaborated once more with young queer activists from Myanmar, Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand to produce 14 episodes of the podcast series, this time entitled, "**Southeast Asian Queer Solidarity: Stronger Together Amidst Adversities!**" Half of the episodes are in Burmese and Bahasa Indonesia. The podcast series aims to amplify the queer voices within local contexts, providing a safe platform for Southeast Asian queer folks to share their struggles, resilience, and collective power in facing adversities in the region. Since then, our podcasts have reached more than 12 countries, with the biggest listeners coming from the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Germany.⁵

Some episodes in this series:

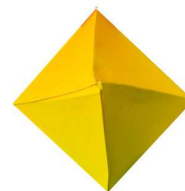
In the episode **The Struggles of Queer Youth Activism in Southeast Asia with Elijah and Wyn**, non-binary activist, Elijah Tay, and a transgender woman teacher, Wyn C. Gallo, both shared why it is important for them to advocate for queer rights.

In **Queer and Wellbeing: The Importance of Our Mental Health**, our speakers from Malaysia - Ash, a professional counselor, and Ken from PLUHO, share the importance of mental health and how marginalized groups like the LGBTQIA+ are vulnerable and prone to mental illnesses.

Patricia, the founder of GirlxGirl, a women loving women organization based in Thailand, talks about her profound experiences and the contrasting differences in freedom of living in the United States and Thailand in the episode **Queer and Freedom of Expression, How Does It Matter?**



⁵ ASEAN SOGIE Caucus. Hear Queer Stories, Available via <https://open.spotify.com/show/06vPwMA03hdgxvO1QDOSxP?si=c7bce8ef40cd4b9e>.



Engaging with regional and global HR mechanisms

To ensure ASC's visibility in regional and global platforms, ASC actively engaged in various LGBTQIA+ convenings:

Casa Asia engaged ASC in co-organizing a series of online discussions on LGBTQIA+ rights in Asia. The title of the series is "**Being LGBTQIA+ in Asia**". The first webinar took place on January 25, 2022, and focused on the legal and policy challenges. The second webinar took place on April 26, 2022, and focused on challenges and developments in relation to the rights of lesbian, bisexual, and queer women.

The Asia Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) engaged ASC as one of their resource persons during their pilot **Media Fellowship Program**. ASC gave a session on SOGIESC, SOGIESC issues in ASEAN, and ethical and practical considerations for effective media coverage of LGBTQIA+ issues during elections. The session took place last January 21, 2022, and involved around 10 journalists from Myanmar, Malaysia, Philippines, and Viet Nam.

Equal Rights Coalition is a multilateral mechanism involving governments and civil society organizations advancing the human rights of LGBTQIA+ persons. ASC participated in the on-line convenings specifically for its Working Group on International Diplomacy and Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) ASC provided reliable and sound information and analysis about key concerns in the region. In September 7 to 9, 2022, ASC participated in the **Equal Rights Coalition Conference** in Buenos Aires, Argentina on September 7 to 9, 2022. Ryan Silverio, ASC Executive Director, was part of a panel discussion of the Working Group on International Diplomacy.



Virtual participation to the **ILGA World 2022 Conference** from May 2 to 6, 2022 in Long Beach, California and on-site participation to the **9th ILGA Asia Conference 2022** from November 28 to December 2, 2022, in Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam, themed “Our Trials, Our Triumphs, and the Future We Demand.” ASC shared emerging regional challenges and regional solidarity for a flourishing movement. ASC organized and led four (4) panel sessions and supported three (3) other sessions led by ASC’s network organizations. The panel sessions covered topics on violence and discrimination against LGBQ communities, anti-gender movement, SOGIE change efforts, among others.



2nd EU-Southeast Asia Civil Society Forum held on October 21-22, 2022 in Jakarta, Indonesia. ASC was able to convey the recommendations to the 4th EU-ASEAN Policy Dialogue on Human Rights on October 24, 2022. The recommendations are aimed at strengthening human rights protection within ASEAN and the EU. The recommendations are based on present and emerging challenges faced by vulnerable groups, human rights defenders and pro-democracy activists, and on recommendations submitted by CSOs at the EU-ASEAN Human Rights Dialogue in 2019.

The EU-Taiwan LGBTI Human Rights Conference from October 27 to 28, 2022 in Taipei. This event is an annual dialogue co-organized by the Department of Gender Equality of the Executive Yuan, the Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the European Economic and Trade Office. ASC participated as one of the speakers during the workshop titled, "Protection and Promotion of LGBTQI+ Rights", where trends, developments, and challenges in the Southeast Asian region were discussed.

Asia Democracy Assembly 2022 on November 7 to 9, 2022. The Asia Democracy Assembly is a gathering of civil society, academics, media, and other stakeholders in the defense of democracy, and is convened by the Asia Democracy Network. ASC spoke during the plenary session on the role of social movements in democracy during the plenary session. ASC's presentation was captured in an article, titled "Social Movements in Asia, from Silos to Strength."⁶



⁶ Lazarus, Eduard, 2023. "Social movements in Asia, from Silos to Strength", Asia Democracy Chronicles. Retrieved from <https://adnchronicles.org/2023/03/02/social-movements-in-asia-from-silos-to-strength/>.

Outright International's Global Week of Advocacy took place last December 1 to 12, 2022. During this program, ASC was able to engage with various UN missions, and some UN agencies such as UNICEF, UNDP, and UN Women. ASC's participation in the program was reflected in a video documentation produced by Outright.⁷

Engagement during the Human Rights Council 50th Session

ASC participated during the 50th Session of the UN Human Rights Council from June 13 to July 8, 2022. This session was the first time ASC participated in its capacity as an ECOSOC-accredited organization.

Three oral interventions were made by ASC during the meeting. First was during the **Interactive Dialogue on the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education** (June 23, 2022) where ASC collaborated with COC Nederlands and that the statement was delivered by Lini Zurlia, ASC Advocacy Officer.⁸ Second was during the **UPR Outcome of Timor Leste** (June 30, 2022) where we worked together with Arcolris Timor Leste, Hatutan Youth Network, and CODIVA in developing the NGO statement; the speech was delivered by Iram Saeed of Arcolris Timor Leste.⁹ Third was during the Annual thematic panel discussion on technical cooperation and capacity-building, with the theme **"Technical cooperation on the full and effective participation of women in decision making and in public life and on the elimination of violence, with a view to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls"** (July 4, 2022). The speech focused on the need for UN and ASEAN/regional dialogues and technical expertise sharing in the area of SOGIE, and it was delivered by Ryan Silverio.¹⁰



⁷ Outright International, 2022. "Ryan Silverio | ASEAN SOGIE Caucus," February 2023. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdi53VMHqcl>.

⁸ United Nations Web TV, 2022. "ID: SR on education - 18th Meeting, 50th Regular Session of Human Rights Council," 23 June 2022. Retrieved from <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k13/k13vwwde5k>.

⁹ United Nations Web TV, 2022. "Timor-Leste, UPR Report Consideration - 32nd Meeting, 50th Regular Session Human Rights Council," 1 July 2022. Retrieved from <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1z/k1zekvtxcq>.

¹⁰ United Nations Web TV, 2022. "Panel Discussion on Technical cooperation - 33rd Meeting, 50th Regular Session of Human Rights Council," 4 July 2022. Retrieved from <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k12/k124wy6xvg>.

ASC also submitted oral interventions to two other sessions but were not publicly presented due to limited time allotment for CSOs. These were the following: **Interactive Dialogue with the UN Independent Expert on Violence and Discrimination on the basis of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity** (June 17, 2022), and the **Interactive Dialogue with the UN Independent Expert on Human Rights and International Solidarity** (June 24, 2022).

Engagements related to the Sustainable Development Goals

ASC leveraged on its UN ECOSOC Status and made a written submission for the 2022 ECOSOC High-level Segment. The submission was focused on the theme, “Building Back Together from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. ASC’s submission centered on the key outcomes and recommendations derived from the regional report on the impact of COVID-19 on LGBTIQ organizations in SE Asia.¹¹

Engagement with UN Special Procedures

ASC continued to submit communications to the UN Independent Expert on Protection Against Violence and Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (IESOGI) to express concerns over human rights violations in the region. In coordination with Arus Pelangi, Sanggar Swara, HRWG, and local organizations in Indonesia, ASC sent a joint communication to the IESOGI, the Special Rapporteur on Torture, and the Working Group on Violence Against Women and Girls in response to the human rights violation committed by the Bogor City Parliament in passing the local regulation, “Prevention and Countermeasures of Sexual Deviant Behavior (P4S)”, which legitimizes conversion practices through rehabilitation. Another submission made by ASC was in relation to the threats over a lesbian human rights defender from the Philippines, who was red-tagged by pro-government broadcast personalities.

ASC responded to the Independent Expert on SOGIE’s call for inputs for the report to the 77th General Assembly, on the intersections of SOGIE and peace and security. ASC’s submission centered on two conflict situations that directly impacted LGBTQIA+ rights: the peace process in Aceh which led to the adoption of strict Shariah laws in

¹¹ United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2022. “Statements submitted by organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council,” 2022. Retrieved from <https://ecosoc.un.org/sites/default/files/d7-files/files/en/2022doc/ngo-Written-Statements-2022-HLS.pdf>.

the province, and the peace process in Bangsamoro which created mechanisms to guarantee human rights, the creation of local redress measures, and the persistent social stigma that resulted to SOGIESC-based violence. ASC's submission was cited in the final report of the IESOGI. ¹²

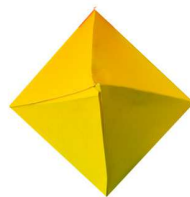
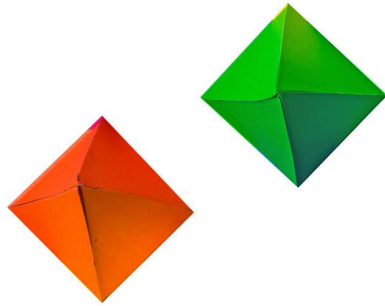
#RenewIESOGI - ASC joined the extensive lobbying for the renewal of the mandate of the independent expert on SOGI. Together with ILGA World, we lobbied both Cambodia and the Timor Leste governments to get their support to endorse the resolution. ASC also joined the global solidarity campaign, which called on the Human Rights Council to renew the Mandate of the UN Independent Expert on SOGI. This campaign resulted in the adoption of the HRC resolution on the renewal of the mandate. The said resolution likewise explicitly expressed strong concern over continuous cases of violence and discrimination, and called upon states to undertake all measures possible.

"Calls upon States to amend or repeal laws and policies that discriminate against persons on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity, and to take effective measures to prevent, investigate and, where applicable, to prosecute acts of violence and discrimination based on those grounds, both online and offline." (*Paragraph 3*)

Human Rights Council Resolution 50/10 on the renewal of the mandate of the IESOGI, July 15, 2022.

The regional workshop and consultation, "**Enhancing Knowledge of and Engagement by Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) with United Nations Human Rights Mechanisms**" was successfully conducted from October 3 to 5, 2022 in Bangkok, Thailand. This was jointly organized with the OHCHR Southeast Asia Regional Office, UN Women Asia Pacific, and with the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). In this workshop and consultation, 48 LGBTQIA+ human rights defenders from Southeast Asia were able to interact directly with the UN IESOGI, Victor Madrigal-Borloz, and to learn about the various UN mechanisms that are available for the advancement of human rights.

¹² UN General Assembly, 2022. "Report of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination on the based on sexual orientation and gender identity, Victor Madrigal-Borloz", July 27, A/77/235.



The Year 2022 in Figures

15

Online convenings that served as spaces for collaboration, dialogues, and cross-learning among LGBTQIA+ activists

180

Individuals from the 11 Southeast Asian countries that we have reached through our local and regional online convenings, learning sessions, and workshops.

40

Local initiatives of LGBTQIA+ organizations supported. These include those supported through the Rainbow Reach Out, ASEAN Queer Leadership X. This also includes other forms of technical support extended to local LGBTQIA+ organizations.

449

Approximate number of individuals we have reached through our Rainbow Reach Out Program.

1

Publication produced

175

Online content produced such as podcasts, videos, graphics, and publications.

385,716

Facebook Audience Reach

7,308M

Twitter Impressions

52,065

Instagram Reach

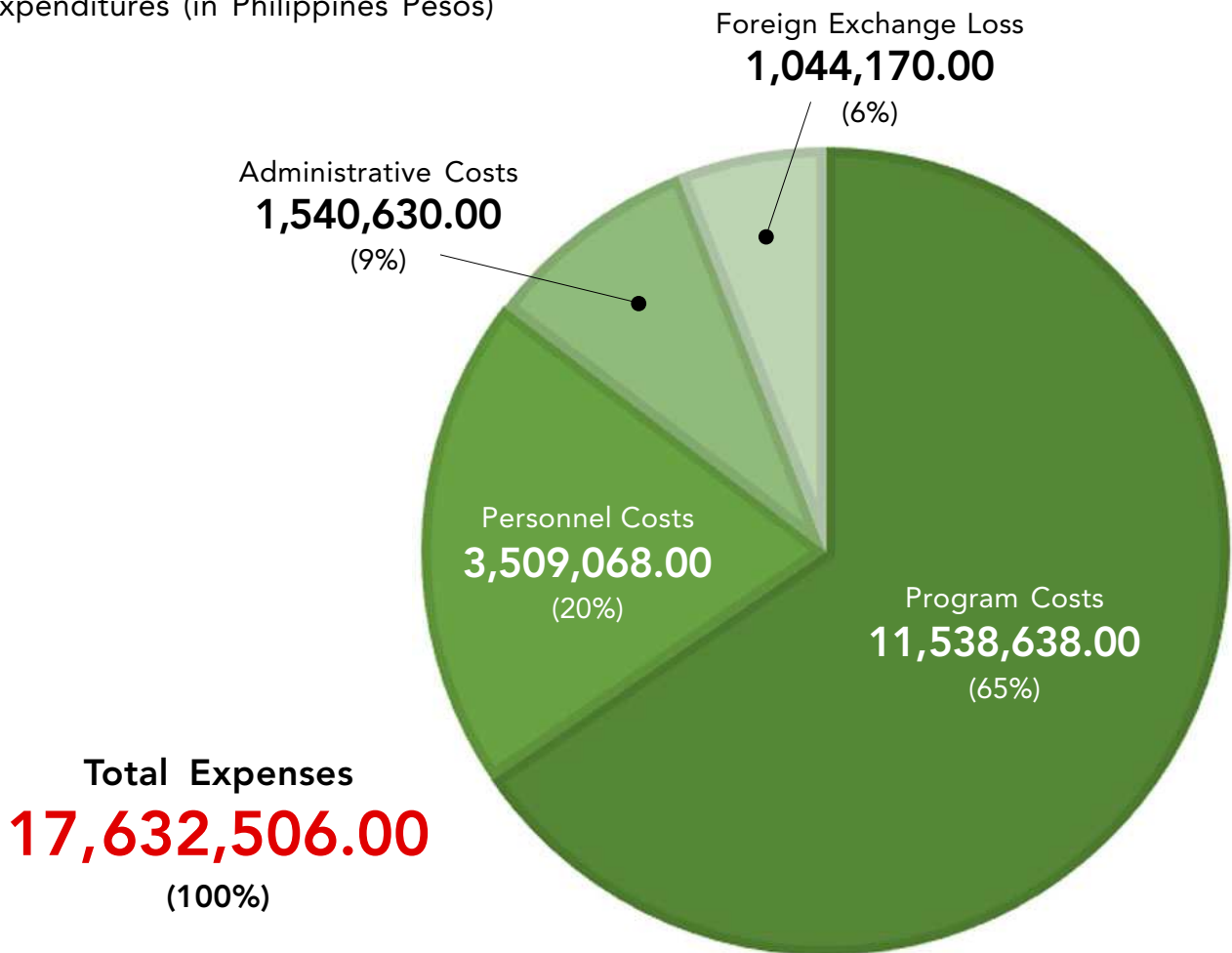
Financial Report

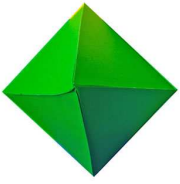
For the year 2022

Cash Receipts in Philippine Pesos

RECEIPTS	In Philippine Pesos
Grants	18,317,850.00
Donations	257,789.00
Interest	59,588.00
Total Receipts	18,632,277.00
Total Expenditures	Php17,632,506.00

Expenditures (in Philippines Pesos)





Our Team

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(2019 to 2022)

Jean Chong, *Chairperson*
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 Vien Tanjung, INDONESIA
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(2023 to 2026)

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 Thilaga Sulathireh, MALAYSIA
 Yuli Rustinawati, INDONESIA

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 Yen Hai Nguyen, *Program Manager*
 Lini Zurlia, *Advocacy Officer*
 Jan Castañeda, *Program Associate*
 Dali R., *Communications Associate*
 Genica Bucao, *Project Officer - FIFF*
 Mario Pratama, *Project Coordinator- FPAR*
 Belinda Mirasol, *Finance Officer*
 Juliet De Guzman, *Administrative Officer*
 Carolina Advincula, *Administrative Assistant*

ASC MEMBERS

ASC is a membership organization composed of individual human rights defenders as well as LGBTIQ focused organizations. We have members from eight (8) countries in the Southeast Asian region.

Our organizational members are:

- Arus Pelangi
- Arco Iris Timor Leste
- CamASEAN Youth's Future
- Colors Rainbow
- Iloilo Pride Team
- Indonesia for Humans
- Institute for the Study of Society, Economy and Environment (ISEE)
- Justice for Sisters
- Micro Rainbow International
- Outright Action International
- Sayoni
- Seksualiti Merdeka
- Togetherness for Equality and Action (TEA) Group

Acknowledgements

ASC's collaborative way of working was made possible with the support of the following organizations, networks and institutions:

AICHR Indonesia | AICHR Malaysia |
AICHR Thailand | AICHR
Philippines

ALTSEAN Burma

APCOM Foundation

Arcolris Timor-Leste

ASEAN Civil Society Conference/
ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/
APF) 2022

Asia-Pacific Resource & Research
Centre for Women-ARROW

Asia Democracy Network

Asian Network of A-Spec
Queer Activists (ANOQA)

Asia Pacific Transgender Network

ASEAN Youth Forum (AYF)

ASEAN Youth Conference on
Violence (YVC)

B-Dev

Cangkang Queer

Commission on Human Rights
of the Philippines

COC Netherlands

Edge Effect

Embassy of Canada in the Philippines

Embassy of Belgium in the
Philippines

Embassy of Finland in the Philippines

Embassy of Netherlands in the
Philippines

Equal Asia Foundation

Equality Australia

ESBISQUET

FORUM ASIA

Free To Be Me (FTBM)

GALANG Philippines

Global Philanthropy Project

Hanoi Queer

Independent Expert on protection
against violence and discrimination
based on sexual orientation and
gender identity (SOGI)

ILGA Asia

ILGA World

Initiatives for International Dialogue

Innovation for Change East Asia Hub
(I4C-EA)

Intersex Asia

Intersex Philippines

Intersex Equality Rights Coalition UK

Inpride Bangkok

IWRAW Asia Pacific

Jaringan Transgender Indonesia (JTID)

Legal Dignity
Metro Manila Pride
Movement for Alternatives and
Solidarity in Southeast Asia
(MASSA)
Milk Tea Alliance
MUJER LGBT Organization
Narasi Toleransi
Nationwide Organization of
Visually-IMpaired Empowered
Ladies (NOVEL)
Non-Binary Thailand
Office of the High Commissioner
for Human Rights
OutRight Action International
Panggung Minoritas
PanACEa / Asexuality Asia
Permanent Mission of Canada
to ASEAN
Permanent Mission of the
United States to ASEAN
Philippine LGBT Chamber of
Commerce
Plan International Asia Pacific Region
Pride PH
Queer Indonesia Archive
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Rainbow Six
ROJALI
San Julian Pride
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STRAP
SUHAKAM
Susuri Pelangi Podcast
TERPCAP
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UPCIDS Alternative Development
Program
Urgent Action Fund for Women -
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Visayas LGBTQ Network
Women and Gender Institute,
Miriam College
Women's Legal and
Human Rights Bureau
Youth for YOUth
Youth Voices Count

We thank the following donors
for their continuous trust and
confidence towards ASC:

GiveOut
International Women's Rights Action
Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP)
Kaleidoscope Diversity Trust
(Kaleidoscope Trust)
Open Society Foundation (OSF)
Swedish Federation for Lesbian,
Gay, Bisexual, Transgender,
Queer and Intersex Rights (RFSL)
Women Fund Asia (WFA)
VOICE

Support Our Work



SUPPORT QUEER ADVOCACY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Your donation will go a long way in supporting our mission. Together, let's strengthen LGBTIQ activism in Southeast Asia.



Contact Us

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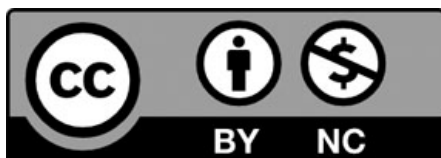
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