

Corona relief package: **ASEAN**

August 2020





Businesses around Asia Pacific, especially in Southeast Asia, are among the sectors greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Mid-sized entities, in particular, must navigate the financial and operational challenges of the coronavirus while addressing the needs of their people, customers, and suppliers. Among these challenges are working with agility, connecting with changing customer habits, leveraging technology, and building on opportunity and resilience. Many organizations also face difficulties in managing their cash flow and seeking financing. In response to the call of the private sector for relief and support, governments around the region have begun to provide measures to bolster industry sectors, businesses, and even individuals.

P&A Grant Thornton—the Philippine member firm of Grant Thornton International Ltd—in collaboration with the Grant Thornton network in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), have gathered the measures taken by our respective governments to provide COVID-19 relief in the following countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. We have created this comprehensive and helpful guide that highlights the relief made available by governments in ASEAN. The various government relief measures cover the following areas: financial, corporate, tax, social and health care, and employment.

Whether your business in this emerging economic bloc needs to steer through the impact of the global health crisis or wants answers to important business questions, we are one with you in finding your way forward. To discuss COVID-19 government relief and any related matters impacting your business, speak to your local Grant Thornton member firm.





Financial



Cambodia

- Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) issued decision No. 028 to establish a working group to study and plan monetary and banking measures, named the “Multidisciplinary Working Group”, which is co-chaired by representatives from the MEF and the National Bank of Cambodia. The aim of this working group is to support the Committee on Economic and Financial Policy to design and implement measures to manage the impact of Covid-19 and ‘Everything but Arms’ (EBA) withdrawal under European Union. This working group invited officials from ministries, institutions, organizations, development partners, private sector representatives, and other relevant counterparts to participate during their meeting if necessary.
- The government established a task force to control supply and prices of strategic goods during the fight against Covid-19. The task force determined the types of strategic goods that are deemed essential for daily consumption during the Covid-19 situation for instance: rice, salt, vegetable, fish, meat, mask, cleaning alcohol, pharmaceutical and medical equipment. Apart from monitoring the daily demand and supply of such strategic goods and guarantee sustainability without any interruptions, the task force also handles quality checks and ensures appropriate pricing to avoid dramatic price increases.
- The National Bank of Cambodia (“NBC”) issued a press release announcing to provide more liquidity to Cambodian banks and financial institutions (“BFIs”) to help mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Cambodia’s economy.
- A USD200 million credit guarantee fund has been issued to provide loan guarantees to ease the cash flow and working capital pressures of businesses in all sectors, which is expected to generate liquidity of at least USD2,000 million. The MEF provided additional financing of up to USD300 million to promote the growth in key sectors during and after the Covid-19 crisis.



Indonesia

- The government issued a National Economic Stimulus as a Countercyclical Policy of Coronavirus Disease 2019 Infection Impact (“POJK 11/2020”). POJK 11/2020 primarily is intended to support economic growth for debtors impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, including for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (“MSME”) debtors, conducted through policies on asset quality determination and credit restructuring and financing.
- The World Bank approved USD250 million loan to support Indonesia's Covid-19's response. The funds will go toward strengthening the country’s emergency response to the pandemic, including improving intensive care capacity, providing more personal protective equipment and improving the laboratory network and surveillance system.
- The government vowed to utilize budgets from remaining over budget, endowment funds and accumulations of education endowment funds, funds controlled by the state, funds controlled by public service institutions and/or funds from reductions of state capital investments of state-owned enterprises to support Covid-19 programs.
- The government issued government bonds and/or Sharia government bonds for the purpose of Covid-19 to be purchased by Bank Indonesia, state-owned enterprises, corporate investors and/or retail investors.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved USD1.5 billion in financing to support the Government of Indonesia’s efforts to alleviate the impact of the pandemic on public health, livelihood, and the economy.
- The Government of Indonesia issued Government Regulation in lieu of law No. 1 Year 2020 (Perppu-1) which is effective immediately upon issuance. Perppu-1 is a New Economic Policy in response to COVID-19 pandemic, to help secure national economic stability. Perppu-1 governs new economic policy in the areas of taxation, government spending, and financing. One of the provisions is governing the reduction in Corporate Income Tax (“CIT”) rate, which will be gradually reduced from the current rate of 25% to 22% for fiscal year 2020 and 2021 and to 20% starting fiscal year 2022.



Financial



Malaysia

- Economic Stimulus Package 2020 worth RM20 billion was introduced to ensure the economic risks associated with the outbreak is effectively addressed. Second Stimulus Package worth RM250 billion was announced to strengthen the economy, as well as necessary measures to provide assistance to all Malaysians who are affected by the Covid-19 outbreak.
- The government prepared a more robust business continuity plan with more recovery options, if similar crises were to occur in the future.
- The government provided free internet during the lockdown period as well as improved the country's telecommunication network.
- As part of its efforts to stabilize the economy in the medium-term, the government injected MYR25 billion (USD5.7 billion) into the economy. Furthermore, MYR2 billion (USD457 million) allocated for domestic, small-scale infrastructure projects.



Philippines

- The government mandated the Republic Act No. (RA) 11469, otherwise known as the "Bayanihan to Heal as One Act".
- The government ensured the availability of credit to the productive sectors of the economy through measures such as, but not limited to, lowering the effective lending rates of interest and reserve requirements of lending institutions under "Bayanihan to Heal as One Act".
- The Government provided that any unutilized, unspent or unreleased balance in the special purpose funds of GOCCs, sourced from collections or receipts, including future collections and receipts, shall be realigned/used to address the Covid-19 situation.
- PhpP275 billion funds of the 2020 national budget were realigned to support programs to fight the pandemic, Php180 million of which will be for the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD) of DOLE giving Php5,000 one-time financial assistance to affected workers.
- Php1.3 billion was allotted for the COVID Adjustment Measures Program (CAMP) to benefit 250,000 workers, one-time financial cash assistance amounting to USD200 by DOLE to OFWs whose employment were affected by the outbreak.
- One-time financial assistance amounting to USD200 or its equivalent in local currency by DOLE for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) whose employment were affected by Covid-19 outbreak.
- USD5 million approved emergency grant by ADB for Philippines' fight against the Covid-19 outbreak to be implemented by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).
- Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) remitted Php20 billion dividends to the National Government to support the government's programs during ECQ due to Covid-19.
- Php300 billion bond buying program was approved between BSP and Bureau of Treasury (BoT) to boost funds in combating the outbreak. Under this program, BSP will buy debt papers from BoT, which the latter must repay within six months.
- BSP pulled down key interest rate to 2.75 percent to lower cost of borrowings that can in turn encourage more business activities that could soften impact of the pandemic. Overnight deposit and lending rates were likewise trimmed to 2.25 percent and 3.75 percent, respectively.
- BSP reduced the reserve requirement (RR) ratios of BSP-supervised financial institutions of up to a maximum of 400 bps for 2020. A 200 bps reduction in the RR ratio of reservable liabilities of universal and commercial banks (U/KBs) was made effective March 30, 2020.



Financial



Singapore

- The Singaporean Government launched its stimulus package to counter the economic fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic. The stimulus plan is estimated to be worth more than SGD90 billion (USD64.7 billion), drawing on national reserves for the first time since the global financial crisis in 2009.
- The Fortitude Budget continues where the Solidarity Budget left off by building on and enhancing a number of the announcements from earlier Budgets to provide support to businesses in these extraordinary times. The central focus of this Budget is jobs. To support businesses and save jobs, the Budget focused on the 3Cs – cash flow, costs and credit.
- The government committed to allocate SGD6.4 billion (USD4.4 billion) in its 2020 state budget (also called Unity Budget) to fight the pandemic that focused on providing short-term financial support for businesses and families impacted by the outbreak.
- The government through Enterprise Singapore (ES), an organization under the Ministry of Trade designed to assist the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), has issued the trade loan financing scheme (EFS-Trade Loan) to help finance an enterprise's domestic and international transactions.
- The government has also laid out new incentives for the tourism and aviation industries, the two most impacted due to the pandemic.
- Singaporeans received a one-off cash payment ranging from SGD300 (USD209), to SGD900 (USD627) depending on their income, and a cash payment to each Singaporean parent with at least one young child of SGD300 (USD215)



Thailand

- An executive decree borrowed THB1 trillion to boost the economy, of which THB600 billion would ease people's plight for 6 months, to help farmers, and support public health services and of which THB400 billion plan would be used to strengthen the community economy, and boost local infrastructure development.
- The Thai cabinet approved the first stimulus package on March 10, 2020 worth THB400 billion, followed by the second package worth THB117 billion on March 24, 2020.
- The Government Savings Bank (GSB) provided low interest loan of THB150 billion to financial institutions with interest of 1% per annum. In turn, the financial institutions shall provide loans to enterprises with interest rate of 2% on the first THB20 million loan for the first 2 years.



Vietnam

- Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on businesses and social activities. On March 4th, 2020, the Prime Minister signed-off Direction No.11/CT-TTg on urgent actions and solutions to remove business difficulties, ensure social security under ongoing COVID-19 epidemic. Accordingly, the most notable points are the Prime Minister guided the State Bank launching the credit support package amounting to VND250 trillion for businesses and instructed the Ministry of Finance to offer the support package of VND30 trillion solving business difficulties and ensuring social security.



Corporate



Cambodia

- Cambodia issued regulations to support businesses recently impacted by the Covid-19 outbreak as well as from the partial withdrawal of 'Everything but Arms' (EBA) status by the European Union (EU).
- The government announced some measures to support the airline industry in Cambodia. These include exemption of minimum tax for 3 months from March to May 2020 for Cambodia Airlines and delayed payments of civil airfare for six months with the permission from the airlines to process the debt after this period.
- The SME Bank of Cambodia was officially launched by the Ministry of Economy in April 2020 and has USD100 million of funds which can be applied for as loans by the businesses.



Indonesia

- The government issued economy recovery program to credit restructuring and financing for small and medium businesses, and among other businesses.
- The government mandated credit relaxation for loans below IDR10 billion for business purposes, applied to both loans provided by banks and by non-bank financial industry. Interest will be reduced and repayments will be delayed for up to one year.



Malaysia

- Bursa Malaysia announced additional relief measures to alleviate the impact of Covid-19 on capital market players.
- Rebate of 50% of the annual listing fees for the year 2020 was granted to Listed Issuers that have a market capitalisation below RM500 million as at December 31, 2019; and reported financial losses as measured by Group loss after tax in their quarterly report for a quarter ended on any date between April 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020 (inclusive) notwithstanding the date of the submission of the same.
- Bursa Malaysia extended one month to submit financial statements. Listed issuers were granted an automatic one-month extension for issuance of quarterly and annual reports for the Main and ACE Markets, as well as semiannual and annual audited financial statements for the LEAP Market, that were due on March 31, 2020 and April 30, 2020. Notwithstanding the one-month extension, listed issuers were reminded to comply with their continuing disclosure obligations under the Listing Requirements including the obligation to make immediate announcements of any material information to ensure that shareholders and investors continue to receive information in a timely manner.
- Additionally, Bursa Malaysia has also granted listed issuers with financial year ending on 31 March 2020 an extension of one month to issue their annual reports and annual audited financial statements by August 31, 2020, instead of July 31, 2020.
- The government extended one month to submit financial statements. Listed issuers were granted an automatic 1-month extension for issuance of quarterly and annual reports for the Main and ACE Markets, as well as semi-annual and annual audited financial statements for the LEAP Market, that were due on March 31, 2020 and April 30, 2020. Notwithstanding the 1-month extension, listed issuers were reminded to comply with their continuing disclosure obligations under the Listing Requirements including the obligation to make immediate announcements of any material information to ensure that shareholders and investors continue to receive information in a timely manner.



Corporate



Philippines

- The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has implemented the deferment until further notice of weekly submission of FX Form 1 Report and Rescheduling of the Implementation of the International Transactions Reporting System (ITRS) for all universal/commercial banks and thrift banks covering the period 9 March to 9 April 2020.
- The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has implemented the easing of the exchange of communications between the banks and BSP-DLC and to simplify the application and ailment procedures in obtaining a Rediscounting Line from the BSP in order to allow banks to immediately and continuously deliver their financial services during this extraordinary situation.
- The Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) extended the filing of the 2019 annual reports including the quarterly reports for the year 2020 and 2019 AFS until 30 June 2020 for domestic operations only and until 30 June 2020 or 60 days from the date of lifting of travel restrictions/ban, whichever comes later.
- The Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) extended the deadline for the submission of the Sustainability Report for PLCs whose fiscal year ends on 31 December 2019 (or 30 November 2019) to align the same with the extended deadline of the Annual Report.
- The Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) suspended the submission of the original notarized printed copy of the Mandatory Disclosure Form (MDF) until after ECO has been lifted or until further notice.
- The Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) implemented that all banks, quasi-banks, financing companies, lending companies, and other financial institutions, public and private, including the Government Service Insurance System, Social Security System and Pag-ibig Fund implemented a minimum of a thirty (30)-day grace period for the payment of all loans, including but not limited to salary, personal, housing, and motor vehicle loans, as well as credit card payments, falling due within the period of the Enhanced Community Quarantine without incurring interests, penalties, fees or other charges. Persons with multiple loans shall likewise be given the minimum thirty (30)-day period for every loan.
- Pursuant to the objectives of the Department of Labor and Employment to strengthen social protection particularly for vulnerable workers and Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) by providing greater access, ensuring benefits and other welfare services, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) is tasked to provide accommodation assistance to distressed OFWs during the period of the Enhanced Community Quarantine.
- The Board of Investors (BOI) extended the deadline of filing of the following reports for all BPI-registered enterprises: BOI Form S-1 (Annual Report on Annual Operation) on or before 30 June 2020 for those ending on calendar year or 4 months and 15 days after the end of fiscal year for those ending on a fiscal year; AFS and ITR on or before 15 June 2020. Also filing of Motion for Reconsideration (MR) was also extended within 5 working days from the lifting of the ECQ if the prescribed deadline falls within the ECQ period.
- The Board of Investors (BOI) also extended the submission of Tax Incentive Management Transparency Act (TIMTA) reports to the Incentives Administration Service on or before 15 June 2020.
- The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) extended the validity of the Professional Identification Card (PICs) of all professionals expiring during the period of Enhanced Community Quarantine until the lifting of the ECQ. After the lapse of the extension period, all concerned professionals shall file their applications online for PIC renewal within 30 days therefrom without accruing any surcharges/penalties.
- The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has acknowledged the need to further promote awareness on disaster resilience among different micro, small, and medium enterprises in the country, the National MSME Resilience Core Group developed the MSME Guide to Disaster Resilience, designed to serve as a reference material for MSMEs in understanding business continuing practices and the basic concepts of disaster risk reduction and management.
- The Social Security System (SSS) extended payment of contributions for the applicable months of February, March and April 2020 until 1 June 2020 for all regular and household employers. On the other hand, payment of contributions for the applicable first quarter of 2020, may be paid until 1 June 2020.
- The Social Security System (SSS) temporarily extended the filing periods of sickness notifications and sickness benefit claims for contingencies starting on 1 March until 30 April 2020. For sickness notifications of home confinement, employed members may submit their Sickness Notification Forms to their employers within 60 calendar days after the end of their confinement. Their employers, on the other hand, are also given 60 calendar days from the receipt of said forms to submit them to SSS. Self-employed, voluntarily members, and OFW members are likewise given 60 calendar days after the end of their confinement to submit their applications to SSS.



Corporate



Singapore

- The Monetary Authority of Singapore issued an advisory to all financial institutions in Singapore, telling them to strengthen their social distancing measures. Measures include reducing traffic at customer-facing locations, cancelling or deferring all physical events, and promoting a safer workplace.
- Singapore Exchange Regulation (SGX RegCo) in consultation with the Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA) and the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) provided guidance on the holding of general meetings amid the Covid-19 situation. This is further to SGX RegCo's announcement which allowed issuers with a December 31 financial year-end, up to June 30, 2020 to hold annual general meetings ("AGMs") to approve their December 31, 2019 financial results.



Thailand

- The government issued an executive decree set up a THB400 billion corporate bond liquidity stabilization fund to backstop the corporate bond market.
- The enact legislation has transferred budgets worth THB80-100 billion from ministries to finance measures to handle the Covid-19 outbreak.



Vietnam

- Vietnam Bank for Social Policies (VBSP), a government policy bank, implemented preferential credit policies for the poor and other policy beneficiaries. The bank is non-profit, offering a full range of services to the poor at subsidized rates.



Tax



Cambodia

- The Ministry and Economy and Finance (“MEF”) and the National Bank Cambodia jointly considered the relaxing and adjusting of certain conditions applicable to the banking sector in order to increase cash flow within the banking system.
- Tax relief measures for private sectors due to the coronavirus pandemic were announced. The following were covered:
 - An exemption from monthly taxes for June and July for tourism companies, registered hotels, guest houses, restaurants, and tour agencies
 - A minimum tax exemption until July for registered airline companies
 - An establishment of capital funds for key sectors and social support
 - A new online business registration platform to facilitate business registration and aid applications.



Indonesia

- As an economic stimulus, the government prepared four types of tax relief for employers for the period of April – September 2020 with the value of IDR22.97 trillion or EUR12.93 billion. The government mandated that salaries with a maximum of IDR200 million of workers in manufacturing will not be taxed. The government issued no import taxes for the 19 manufacturing industries and zero corporate tax.
- The local government of Jakarta provided tax incentives and reduced state tax. They also provided social support to workers impacted by Covid-19.



Malaysia

- The government provided several options for loan deferments and tax deductions, such as deferment of income tax and loan repayments to assist businesses in managing their cash flow during these uncertain times.
- The government allowed some 750,000 SMEs to postpone the payment of income tax for three months beginning April 1, 2020. In the previous stimulus package, businesses in the tourism sector were allowed to postpone income tax payments for six months, also beginning from April 1, 2020.
- The government said various special assistance, loan facilities, restructuring facilities, and a six month moratorium on businesses, SMEs, and individuals have been provided.
- The repayment moratorium effective April 1 2020 will end on September 30 2020. However, the government has granted a further three-month extension for borrowers who lost their jobs this year and are still unemployed. As for those who had their salaries cut, their monthly instalments for loans such as mortgages and personal loans can be lowered in tandem with the pay cut.



Tax



Philippines

- The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) extended the deadline for the filing and payment of taxes due within the quarantine period, and extended of submission of certain information returns.
- The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) extended of the deadline of application for VAT refund and suspension of the 90-day processing period for those claims that are currently being evaluated by processing offices.
- The Bureau of Internal Revenue implemented the revision of the deadline for the filing and payment of 2019 Annual Income Tax Return (AITR) from April 15, 2020 to May 15, 2020 without imposition of penalties.
- The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) extended the deadline for the filing and payment of value-added tax, quarterly income tax, documentary stamp tax, information returns, and withholding taxes specifically enumerated in the memo to 30 days from the actual statutory deadline.
- The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) amended the Revenue Memorandum Circular (RMC) No. 29-2020 and clarifications on RMC No. 28-2020 relative to the extension of deadlines for filing of CY 2019 Annual Income Tax Return (AITR) and other various returns and payment of taxes due thereon.
- The Local Government Units (LGU) released ordinances that extends deadlines of payment for local business tax, real property tax, and other taxes/fees in their city/municipality.



Singapore

- The following tax return submissions were extended until May 31, 2020:
 - Income tax for Individuals (including sole proprietors and partnerships)
 - Income Tax for Trusts, Clubs and Associations
 - Estimate Chargeable Income (ECI) for companies with financial year ending January 31, 2020
 - Tax Clearance for foreign employees as of April 30, 2020
- GST Returns for accounting period ending March 31, 2020 was extended until May 11, 2020.
- S45 Withholding Tax Forms due in April 2020 was extended until May 15, 2020.
- Deferral of Corporate Income Tax (CIT) Payment. The CIT payments deferred from April, May, and June 2020 will instead be collected in July, August, and September 2020 respectively.



Thailand

- Date for filing corporate income tax extended to August 31, 2020 (Por Ngor Dor 50) and September 30, 2020 (Por Ngor Dor 51).
- Withholding Tax in Thailand (WHT) imposed on payment for services, hire of work, certain commissions, and professional fees will be reduced from 3% to 1.5% for the payments made from April 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020. The WHT will subsequently be reduced to - 2% from October 1, 2020 to December 31, 2021 if the payment is made in the e-WHT system.
- Eligible small and medium enterprises (SMEs) can claim a 150% deduction for interest expenses incurred during the period of 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020 on loans obtained under a funding initiative to provide THB 150 billion in soft loans to SMEs with an interest rate of 2% for the first two years.
- SMEs employers who meet certain requirements can deduct 300% of eligible salary costs that do not exceed THB 15,000 per month per employee paid to employees in the period from April 2020 to July 2020 for corporate income tax purposes.
- The Thai Revenue Department and the Department of Business Development announced relief measures for corporations in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. In particular, the measures focus on relieving the compliance burden for corporations by extending a number of deadlines including holding the annual meeting of shareholders, submission of the corporate income tax return and submission of audited financial statements
 - The deadline for April 2020 is extended to 15 August 2020 (from 15 May 2020).
 - The deadline for May 2020 is extended to 15 September 2020 (from 15 June 2020).



Tax



Vietnam

- The Government issued Decree no 41/2020/ND-CP on tax and land rent deferral to assist enterprises affected during the pandemic.
- A 5-month extension was given, from the deadline for corporate income tax (CIT) payment prescribed by law for the following tax period: CIT finalization payable for FY2019 and Provision CIT payable in the first and second quarters of 2020.
- The Vietnam Government issued the Resolution on 19 Jun 2020 for further tax measures supporting enterprises on responding to the implications of Covid-19. Of which, 30% CIT reduction of tax year 2020, eligible for enterprises with total revenue not exceeding VND200 billion
- According to Tax Authority of Vietnam, some enterprises might not be entitled to 30% CIT reduction if they cannot meet the requirements under the policy. On the other hand, they could enjoy other tax relief such as 15% reduction of land rental fee, 50% reduction of stamp duty for domestically manufactured/assembled automobiles, work permit extension for foreign employees, etc.



Social and Healthcare



Cambodia

- Ministry of Interior's General Commissariat of National Police instructed all technical departments/institutions under its supervision and all municipal and provincial police stations implemented measures to maintain stability and security during the Khmer New Year period.
- The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) also received USD10 million in donations to fight Covid-19 as of April 1, 2020. Part of this money used to order approximately 3 million masks and 5,000 medical suits.
- The Royal Government of Cambodia introduced a social protection program to provide support to poor and vulnerable families across the country holding equity cards, prioritizing children below the age of 5, people living with disabilities, old people aged 60 or above and people living with HIV.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) works closely with the Ministry of Health (MoH), the RGC and partners on all aspects of responding to Covid-19 in Cambodia, including surveillance, screening, tracing and quarantine, strengthening and enhancing Cambodia's health systems including public health capacity to respond to the pandemic, providing strategic and technical advice as part of a broader UN support team, and coordinating the international health response among the UN agencies in the country.
- The Royal Government of Cambodia has deployed staff to provide technical support on risk assessment and epidemiological surveillance to the MoH, providing direct technical support and guidance to health facilities in Phnom Penh and in several provinces in managing the first cases of Covid-19 in Cambodia, and supporting MoH in the development of Cambodia-specific clinical guidelines, drawing on access to the latest global evidence and data.



Indonesia

- Electricity for the 24 million households with 450 VA was made free. Seven million households with 900 VA received a 50% discount. This policy aimed to support the SMEs that were hit by the coronavirus for the period April-June 2020.
- The President issued several Presidential decrees and decisions to refocus governmental activities, such as the reallocation of budget and the procurement of goods and services due to the emergency health situation. This allowed the government to take extraordinary measures, such as providing a mandate and flexibility to the financial authority to do anything needed to protect the stability of the economy.
- Limited domestic flights have been operating since the second week of May 2020, with strict conditions. The passengers should provide result of rapid test or polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or a doctor's note, as well as assignment letter from their organization. More domestic and international flights were in operation as of June 1, 2020. Other modes of transportation such as ferry and intercity train also resumed operations with safety measures and limited schedule.



Malaysia

- A Movement Control Order (MCO) was announced as a measure to curb the outbreak effective March 18 to 31, 2020 nationwide with its main goal to reopen the national economy in a controlled manner.
- An extra MYR500 million (USD114 million) was allocated in the stimulus package to purchase medical equipment, such as ventilators, personal protective equipment, lab equipment, and ICU equipment.
- An additional MYR1 billion (USD229 million) was allotted to purchasing medical equipment and expertise from private healthcare services. The insurance industry (which also includes the Islamic takaful insurance sector) donated MYR8 million (USD1.8 million) to help conduct more Covid-19 tests for insurance and takaful policy holders.
- The government has deferred family insurance and takaful premiums for three months for affected individuals.
- The government provided cash handouts totaling MYR10 billion (USD2.2 billion) for B40 and M40 households. The government classified household incomes into three categories, namely Top 20% (T20), Middle 40% (M40), and Bottom 40% (B40).



Philippines

- The Government released a P30-B to accredited hospitals by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) in line with the government's response against the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The PAG-IBIG Fund/Home Development Mutual Fund (HMDF) offered a three-month moratorium to its member-borrowers to help defray their expenses during the enhanced community quarantine being implemented by the government.
- The Social Security System (SSS) offered a moratorium on short-term loan payments of its members affected by COVID-19 situation for applicable months of February to April 2020.
- The Social Security System (SSS) temporarily suspended its Annual Confirmation of Pensioners Program (ACOP) until the end of April 2020 amid the COVID-19 outbreak. The SSS also continued the release of monthly pensions of pensioners who failed to comply with the ACOP requirements since January 2020.
- The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) funded the 21 shared service facilities (SSF) Project/Fabrication Laboratories (FabLabs) along with privately-un fablabs to produce PPEs, face shields, and aerosol boxes as well as to produce ethyl alcohol.
- The Department of Health (DOH) compensated medical professionals who volunteered to be frontliners at referral hospitals. The compensation of P500 daily will cover the 14 consecutive days they will render and the two-weeks mandatory on-site quarantine that will follow after.
- The government issued a sale of medicine for Senior Citizens and Persons with Disability (PWD) relaxed from a one-month rule to three-months except antibiotics, so they can purchase more than a month's supply of medicines and drugs for chronic conditions requiring continuous use during ECQ.
- The government provided cash aid between P5,000 to P8,000 given to vulnerable sectors of society such as persons with disabilities, senior citizens, pregnant mothers, homeless persons, and workers in the informal sectors by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).
- The government also implemented a minimum of thirty-day grace period given on residential rents falling due within the period of ECQ without incurring interests, penalties, fees and other charges.
- The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) provided assistance, one-time financial support of P5,000 in lump sum regardless of employment status.
- The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) implemented the COVID-19 benefits for inpatient care for patients with probable or confirmed Covid-19 cases.
- The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) implemented the benefit package for testing for SARS-CoV-2 and applied to all Filipinos tested for SARS-CoV-2 to the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) – DOH and to all testing laboratories that are certified by RITM-DOH.
- The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) issued a circular financial risk protection for Filipino health workers and patients against COVID-19. The guideless for the interim coverage and confirmed COVID-19 inpatient case management as well as the coverage of health workers.
- The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) issued guidelines on the COVID-19 Community Isolation Benefit Package (CCIBP) to all Filipinos affected by COVID-19.
- The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) extended the payment of premium contribution of all direct contributors for the month of February to April 2020 until May 31, 2020 without interest. The Direct Contributors are the members of employed, self-earning individuals, professional practitioners, and Overseas Filipino Workers. The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) issued the submission of Itemized Statements for Claims Application for COVID-19 Benefit Packages: All Health Care Providers (HCPs) are required to submit itemized billing statement of patients managed as COVID-19. These itemized billing statements should reflect all emergency room and hospital charges, including professional and reders' fees that shall be submitted to Philhealth on a weekly basis.



Singapore

- The Government enhanced the Care and Support Package that was announced during Budget 2020 to provide further assurance and support to Singaporeans who were concerned about coping with their household expenses during this period of exceptional economic uncertainty. All adult Singaporeans would benefit, with more help given to the less well-off.
- Singapore more than doubled its daily testing capacity since early April and scaled up medical facilities by adding capacity at isolation wards and intensive care units.
- Singapore unveiled a suite of additional measures including onsite medical facilities at all 43 purpose-built dormitories, medical posts that would serve factory-converted dormitories housing around 65,000 workers, and 12 mobile medical teams made up of more than 50 medical personnel.



Thailand

- Responding to a request from the Government of Thailand, the World Health Organization and the United States rushed the delivery of medical supplies including gloves, surgical gowns, goggles and face shields for use by Thailand health professionals in responding to the growing threat of the Covid-19 outbreak.
- As the global pandemic added further strains to frontline health services and back-end supply chains, Thailand's Board of Investment (BOI) announced additional measures in April to accelerate investments in the medical industry, which could have positive implications for the sector's broader strategic goals.



Vietnam

- The Government issued Directive no 11/ CT-TTg on urgent missions and solutions for assisting businesses facing difficulties and ensuring social welfare during Covid-19 outbreak. Pursuant to the Prime Minister's Directive, some support given were related to taxes and rental fees, insurance and labor.
- Vietnam Social Security (VSS) issued Official Letters No 860/BHXH-BT dated March 17, 2020 in providing guidance on suspension of social insurance contributions by entities affected by Covid-19 until the end of June or December 2020 depending on the actual situation.
- The Ministry of Health held a teleconference with the WHO and 700 hospitals at all levels nationwide to disseminate information on Covid-19 prevention and launched a website to disseminate information to the wider public.
- Strategies such as rapid testing and aggressive contact tracing have kept the infection rate to a minimum.
- Employers affected by the pandemic may also apply for a suspension of their contribution to the retirement and survivorship funds of the social insurance program for a maximum of 12 months if the number of employees subject to social insurance contribution has been reduced by at least 50 percent.



Employment



Cambodia

- The RGC increased the budget for the “Cash for Work Program” for year 2020 to USD100 million and provided assistance to unemployed factory/enterprise workers and workers returning home from abroad.
- Cambodia Government provided assistance to 85,000 migrant workers returning from Thailand amid the Covid-19 pandemic.



Indonesia

- The Financial Service Authority issued a regulation to support SMEs which have loans of less than IDR10 billion. The creditor can receive credit restructuring including a reduced interest rate, longer credit term, less penalty and credit conversion.
- Some trade unions have managed to provide basic needs to their members, especially those who have lost their jobs. They also received support from communities and government organizations. The Minister of Women Empowerment and Child Protection for example, facilitated by Fair Wear Foundation, has distributed 239 goody bags for dismissed garment women workers in Jakarta.
- The Labor Inspection continued its work remotely, including technical assistance, socialization, training, consultation and discussion with employers and trade unions.



Malaysia

- Additional measures valued at RM10 billion, aimed in helping businesses in particular SMEs to pull through this challenging period.
- Shortened counter service hours by market participants following MCO. To safeguard the wellbeing of investors and employees of market participants, Bursa Malaysia strongly encourages all market participants which provide counter services to customers to limit their operational hours from 10.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. during the MCO period.
- Healthcare personnel received their special monthly allowance increase from MYR400 (USD91) to MYR600 (USD137) and a special allowance of MYR200 (USD45) for the military, police, civil defense, immigration, firefighters, and members of the voluntary force directly involved in implementing the lockdown.
- Human Resources Development Fund. Companies would be exempt from paying the Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) for six months for all sectors, starting April 1, 2020. The HRDF is a training fund established for skills development and retraining of employees. Businesses pay a levy towards this fund, which is based on each company's annual turnover.



Employment



Philippines

- The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) implemented “TUPAD” to provide temporary wage employment for the displaced workers, underemployed and self-employed workers.
- The government adjusted the measures program for affected workers due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 – COVID-19 Adjustment Measures Program (CAMP). The CAMP aims to provide financial support to affected workers in private establishments to mitigate the adverse economic impacts and reduction of income brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) implementation of the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Displaced/Disadvantaged Workers Program (TUPAD) #Barangay Ko, Bahay Ko (TUPAD #BKBK) Disinfecting/ Sanitation Project. The Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Displaced/Disadvantaged Workers Program is one of the flagship programs of DOLE which aims to contribute to poverty reduction and inclusive growth. It is a community based (municipality/barangay) package of assistance that provides temporary wage employment for the displaced workers, underemployed and self-employed workers.
- The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) has strengthened the social protection particularly for vulnerable workers and Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) by providing greater access, ensuring benefits and other welfare services, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) is task to provide accommodation assistance to distressed OFWs during the period of the Enhanced Community Quarantine.
- The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) provided displaced OFWs on account of Covid-19 with a one-time financial assistance (DOLE-AKAP) of USD200 or Php10,000 or its equivalent to the local currency of the host country.



Singapore

- Employers received a 25% cash grant on the first SGD 4,600 of gross monthly wages (excluding employer Central Provident Fund (CPF) contributions) of each local employee on their CPF payroll. A local employee is a Singapore Citizen or Singapore Permanent Resident.
- Higher payouts are available for employers in Aviation and Tourism (75% rather than 25% cash grant) and Food Services (50% rather than 25%).
- A new COVID-19 Support Grant was introduced to support individuals who have lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The grant provides financial assistance while these individuals find a new job or attend training. Successful applicants will receive a monthly cash grant of SGD800 (USD575), for three months.
- Through the Jobs Support Scheme employers will receive a 25% cash grant for 4 months on the first SGD4,600(USD3,300) of gross monthly wages of each Singaporean Citizen or Singapore Permanent Resident employee.



Thailand

- The Thai cabinet has approved 3 phases of stimulus packages to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak. The most recently announced package on 7 April 2020 is expected to inject THB 1.9 trillion that accounts for 9% of the country's GDP.
- An executive decree authorized the Bank of Thailand to issue soft loans to help businesses.
 - THB500 billion of loans at a 2% interest rate to SMEs.
 - A 6-month debt moratorium on principal and interest for SMEs, for loans not exceeding THB100 million
- The government agencies and state enterprises reduced, deferred or postponed the payment of rental, government fee, service fee or other payments for the business operators.
- The Social Security Office (SSO)'s measures promoted employment, including THB30 billion in soft loans starting at 3% interest for SSO-registered entrepreneurs.
- The government provided THB5,000 a month for three months for approximately three million workers not covered by the Social Security Fund (SSF)



Employment



Vietnam

- Vietnam Government issued Resolution No. 42 to help employers and employees affected by Covid-19. The Resolution consists of a financial package targeting six individual and business types.
- The government provided financial assistance of USD77 (VND1.8 million) per month for employees whose labor contract is temporarily suspended or have to take unpaid leave for a month or above will be eligible. This can be applicable for a maximum period of up to three months starting from April 1, 2020.
- The government provided financial assistance of USD43 (VND 1 million) per month for employees who lose jobs but are not eligible for unemployment allowance or that work without a labor contract and have lost their jobs.



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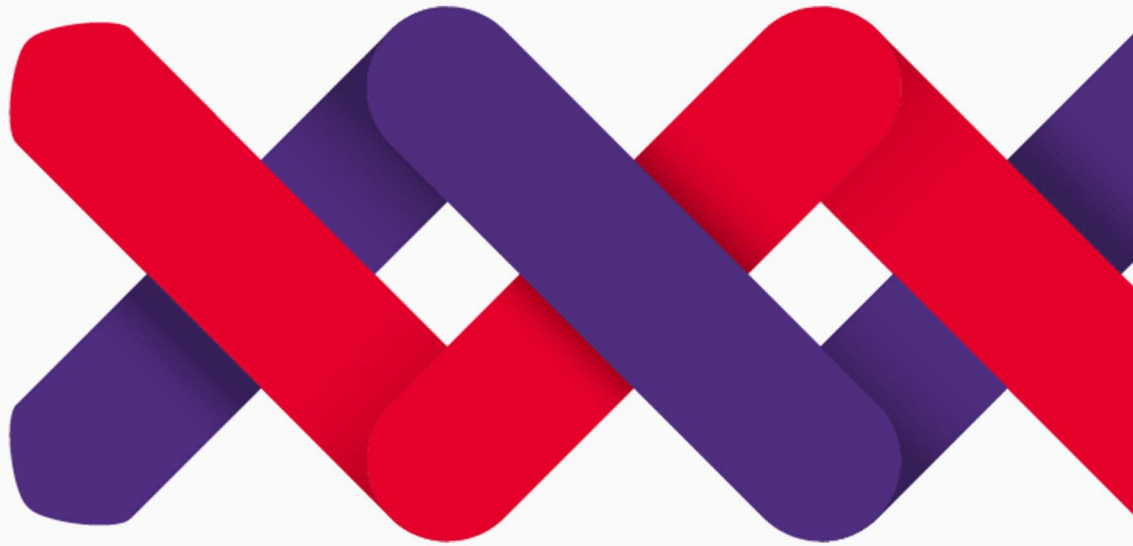
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Footnotes

1. **Cambodia**, Grant Thornton Cambodia, Data as of *July 8, 2020*
2. **Indonesia**, Grant Thornton Indonesia, Data as of *July 15, 2020*
3. **Malaysia**, Grant Thornton Malaysia, Data as of *August 6, 2020*
4. **Philippines**, P&A Grant Thornton, Data as of *June 30, 2020*
5. **Singapore**, Grant Thornton Singapore, Data as of *July 10, 2020*
6. **Thailand**, Grant Thornton Thailand, Data as of *July 11, 2020*
7. **Vietnam**, Grant Thornton Vietnam, Data as of *July 13, 2020*

