WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic in March 2020. The crisis has affected economic and social lives of people around the world since. ASEAN took swift actions to strengthen connectivity to mitigate the immediate impact.

**Impacts of COVID-19**

- Movement restrictions led to business closures and job losses.
- Decreasing economic and industrial activities interrupted global trade and supply chains.
- Mounting pressure on government’s capacity to invest in crucial infrastructure.

**What can ASEAN Connectivity do to help mitigate the impact of COVID-19?**

- Strengthening regional Connectivity to chart the directions for post COVID-19 recovery in ASEAN.
- Greater mobility of labour and resources to respond effectively and efficiently to different needs.
- Resilient infrastructure remains key to sustainable socio-economic growth.
- Increase investment in critical infrastructure to facilitate movement of goods, services and labour.
- Boost industrial capacities to build a competitive regional production network.
- Expand market potentials to scale up regional trade routes and supply chain efficiency.
- Enchance human capital to improve employability.
- Develop future-ready skills of the labour force to meet job market demands.
- Strengthen the digital economy for collective recovery.
- Empower micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to adopt digital technologies to maintain growth.
- Sustain ASEAN trade and economy to mitigate impact.
- Maintain ASEAN’s open economic and integration policies and ensure continued flow of essential goods.

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