On 23rd June 2021, HIRED’s first business consultation was virtually held with the ASEAN Business Advisory council members as well as ASEAN Future Workforce Council.

In the special keynote session, we had YBhg Tan Sri Dato Soh Thian Lai, the President, Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) shared on the rise of significance in Technical, Education and Vocational Training can support in reducing the poverty rate in the case of Malaysia. Furthermore, He also highlighted that the groups of retirees who used to be champions of business and industries can provide a rich pool of trainers and mentors to share their wealth of experience and expertise

Ingo Imhoff, Programme Director, Regional Cooperation in TVET, GIZ stated:

“Governments in the ASEAN region have in recent years expressed their interest in working with the Private Sector to close the skills gap of the region. The open question for them has often been how to get real commitment from the companies. That is why the HIRED Programme is so interesting: it aims to get businesses involved that already engage with the TVET system and offer internships or integrate apprentices or students. Those businesses can make a great contribution by sharing their experiences with other and less experienced companies. Such a mentorship approach from one company to another - which the HIRED project is aiming for - bears great potential.”

Dato Palani, Chair of ASEAN Future Workforce Council:

“A strong commitment from the industry is needed to drive training initiatives and in ASEAN we are still supply-driven with a mismatch of skills. This needs to change as digitalisation is reshaping industries requiring workforce to adapt. Both Industry and the government needs to take a proactive role to design and develop training programmes which the HIRED legacy project is really supporting of this to address the skills gaps in the region.”

Stephen Yee, Asst. Executive Director of Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF):

“One core skills problem in our region is that even if people get trained but don’t follow a standard that the industry endorses there will still be a mismatch. Especially now with the requirements of the “gig economy” and the changes we are currently facing in the industry because of the accelerated digitalisation, the skills required which companies look for change very fast. I believe the concept of lifelong learning is essential and companies need to be equipped in implementing reskilling and upskilling programmes for their employees.”