REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

RCE GREATER GOMBAK

JOURNEY TOWARDS
HOLISTIC COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

Edited by
Wan Zahidah Wan Zulkifle & Zainal Abidin Sanusi

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الجامعة الاسلامية العالمية ماليزيا
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA
يونيۏرسيتي إسلام انتاراڠسا مليسيا
Garden of Knowledge and Virtue

RCE
GREATER GOMBAK

REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE
ON EDUCATION FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ACKNOWLEDGED BY

UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY

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Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development

RCEs around the world

www.rcenetwork.org

RCE G2 Functions and Map

RCE Greater Gombak portrays the **Functional model of RCE** instead of geographical recognising the fact that sustainable development issues are borderless.

While Gombak will be the main location for the RCE activities, the area of coverage will bridge the existing **RCE Central Semenanjung** to that of **RCE Iskandar**. The unique scope of RCE Greater Gombak is it serves a new model of collaboration among RCEs; **tripartite RCE collaboration model**.

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Certificate of Acknowledgement

This is to certify that

RCE Greater Gombak

was acknowledged by
United Nations University

1 April 2020

United Nations University

Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS)

Major Scope of Activities

Whole Community Transformation towards Sustainable Society

RCE Greater Gombak aims to transform and empower the community towards sustainable development at all levels of community in line in the spirit of "leaving-no-one-behind" in upholding equity, ethics, and justice.

Spirituality and Sustainability

Taking pride in the diversity of faith-based community as well as the strength in the Indigenous settlement in the Gombak area, the RCE paved the way in the role of spirituality and Indigenous knowledge through ESD. This means greater participation over a much larger and diverse population base.

Sejahtera - Mainstreaming Indigenous Knowledge and Local Wisdom

RCE Greater Gombak is also keen to rejuvenate and mainstream **Sejahtera** - a local concept of sustainable living as one of the main desired outcomes of the RCE. The effort integrates well with the contribution of spirituality and Indigenous value in transforming the whole community.

RCE Greater Gombak Logo

The Greater Gombak (G2) logo is designed in the shape of a heart to depict the following:

(a) the main framework of the RCE based on the 3S of **Spirituality and Sejahtera** with respect to **Sustainability**
(b) the holistic focus towards humanity as part of the **Whole-Institution or -Community Transformation**
(c) the **"inside-out"** approach in balancing the prevailing approach that is inclined towards the reverse

The second G which is flipped in the form of figure 2 (in gold) gives the heart a stylised look of 'Q' symbolising '**quality**' as the core value for the 3S.

Quality heart (read: sincerity, humility and compassion) is the primary driving force that ensures the dynamics of Greater Gombak **remains impactful and relevant at all times.** And under all circumstances in deriving meaning through Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) for all.

The fact that RCE Greater Gombak operates on the basis of functionality rather than by the conventional geographical designation, is further emphasised by the heart-shaped logo. That is, more interconnected through values or substances instead of limited by the form. As such Greater Gombak works **beyond geographical boundaries** cutting across locations where the University campuses are situated. Indeed, currently it straddles over the three states of Selangor, Pahang and Johor in the peninsula, and is bound to involve others in due time.

The three colours that brighten the logo represent that of nature (turquoise), and of distinctiveness (gold); both of which embrace a purple-coloured (violet) heart emoji [💜] that commonly stands for **true love, kindness, empathy, honour and a deep sense of sacrifice.** Being the last colour of the rainbow, it further underlines the need for universal connectivity that sustains humanity through diversity of values.

Vision

Vision Statement

Promoting and advancing natural and cultural heritage (Indigenous community and heritage of Gombak) through the Real-world Labs as conceptual platforms portraying selected dedicated conservation and socio-cultural areas of collaboration.

Objectives

Short-term
- To empower the society in addressing the social, cultural, environmental and economic issues through various platform of collaborations;
- To establish the baseline data, heritage profile, and the exhibition of the heritage in the current context;
- To identify the cross-cutting issues and challenges at the local level and formalise the existing natural and cultural resources as nascent Real-world (living-learning) lab for implementation of ESD;
- To facilitate the integration of ESD in the final dossier for the UNESCO World Heritage site submission;
- To facilitate and connect local champions on Gombak heritage (Indigenous people arts and cultural values, food heritage) in realising the vision of RCE Greater Gombak.

Long-term
To establish and strengthen the Quadruple Helix model of collaborations between the University, the local Gombak Community, the industry, and Gombak Administrative agencies in achieving the following goals:
- To build a society that is socially resilient, culturally sustainable, environmentally friendly and economically viable;
- To facilitate the development of regenerative heritage (natural, man-made and cultural organic) through a Quadruple Helix model of collaboration;
- To establish the Real-world Lab platforms which address cross-cutting issues i.e. social, environment and economy by implementing a transdisciplinary approach;
- To conserve the natural resources in the Gombak area through the establishment of UNESCO World Heritage site;
- To upscale the local community quality of life by instilling sustainable economic and social-cultural values to promote harmonious society synergistically.

RCE G2 Real-world Lab

The concept of a real-world lab works on the basis of longer term supportive structure instead of a pure project-based or case study approach. The lab is to facilitate transformation beyond a singular intervention, oriented towards sustainable development and related goals emphasising on the education aspect.

RCE G2@
IIUM Kuantan
Real-world Lab for **Sustainable Health**
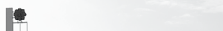
RCE G2@
IIUM Pagoh
Real-world Lab for **Edu-Tourism**

RCE G2@
IPGTAA Kuala Lipis
Real-world Lab for
Indigenous Knowledge

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Foreword by
Prof. Charles Hopkins
UNESCO Chair in Reorienting Education towards Sustainability,
York University, Canada

We are in this together. This phrase, often heard during the pandemic has long been true for our pursuit of a better and more sustainable tomorrow. Working towards a sustainable future of inclusive and just societies, in balance with nature, is at the core of the United Nations efforts and is supported by many global networks. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), balanced action to address the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability (People, Prosperity, Planet) has been added by two more areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet: Peace and Partnership. Strengthening universal peace is the foundation upon which to build a sustainable future. Partnerships at all levels of society, comprised of a vast array of stakeholders and acting in collaboration with national and local governments, are now recognized as essential to make progress on the 2030 Agenda.

While truly aspirational, open, and encompassing in language, the SDGs are applicable to all countries. Yet, they need interpretation into concrete, locally relevant, and culturally appropriate sustainability themes to bring them to life with concrete actions and to meaningfully engage with citizens, institutions, and networks. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is a key enabler to achieve the 17 SDGs and solving the most pressing sustainability challenges in the world. ESD aims to provide access for all to a quality education from early childhood to tertiary level in education; to implement training systems that value and embed principles of sustainability; and to support creating a knowledgeable, aware, and understanding public. ESD as a guiding principle has been a focus to reorient education and create a better understanding of sustainability throughout civil society.

One of the success stories of bringing together local stakeholders to translate the global vision of sustainable development into practical local strategies has been the Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development (RCEs). Launched in 2003 by the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability, this global network has spread to 179 sites around the globe. Individually and collectively,

RCEs have embarked on the journey towards developing global to local sustainability interpretation techniques, turning global goals into appropriate local action. RCEs gather community stakeholders to embrace their collective knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes and to mobilize resources to help develop their community in a more sustainable manner. Embedding ESD in the community as a whole is central to this book. Each successful RCE community has addressed their specific sustainability challenges. The range of approaches and the depth of engagement are significant.

The story of establishing the RCE Greater Gombak (acknowledged in April 2020) displays an outstanding example of moving with breadth, effectiveness, and speed to accomplish a vision and the process of leading a whole community in a transformative approach. This story of inclusive community engagement, implementing meaningful knowledge-based projects, encompassed within such respected timeless contexts as spirituality, Indigenous knowledge, and Sejahtera is a story that is truly necessary to share and for others to build upon. The projects outlined in this book will further the reader´s understanding of an RCE in practice.

Central to the various stories comprising this book is the unique role of the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) as a driving force within the community. IIUM's commitment and meaningful collaboration in the Greater Gombak region have been instrumental in creating both the RCE and the ongoing path to a more sustainable future.

The first year of the RCE Greater Gombak has been an unprecedented story of success in promoting and advancing natural and cultural heritage through real-world labs as conceptual platforms portraying selected dedicated conservation and socio-cultural areas of collaboration. Even the economic future of many of the neediest in the community is looking brighter by building back their cultural heritage.

My sincere appreciation goes to all who have formed the RCE Greater Gombak, who continue to participate on the local level and share their insight within the global network of RCEs and by publishing this book, contributing their learnings to the Global Learning Space of the Global RCE Network.

Charles Hopkins
UNESCO Chair in Reorienting Education towards Sustainability
York University, Canada

Foreword by
Dzulkifli Abdul Razak

Co-Chair of RCE Greater Gombak and
Rector of International Islamic University
Malaysia

For decades, universities have been dubbed as 'ivory towers', where their community often garnered a reputation as elitist, highly intellectual individuals who are in their esoteric pursuit of knowledge. While ivory tower is a metaphor of pride to some, the realities of universities nowadays unfortunately is no longer relevant to such metaphor. Realising the need to remain relevant to the real-world, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) has embarked on the journey to transform itself, and higher education institutions in general, bringing back the role as an institution that is engaged with the community at large, mainstreaming the concept of 'communiversity' instead.

In this journey, IIUM had been working closely and tremendously with various stakeholders from all groups of society towards achieving the targets of Sustainable Development Goals and restoring humanity. With COVID-19 pandemic hitting all parts of the world, it is very apt that these collaborative efforts between IIUM and its partners are duly acknowledged by the United Nations University, Tokyo, as Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) on Education for Sustainable Development on recommendation of RCE Global Service Centre and Ubuntu Committee of Peers on 1st April 2020. It is better known as the RCE Greater Gombak being the first during the pandemic era, and 175th worldwide since 2005.

RCE is a network of existing formal, non-formal, and informal education organisations, mobilised to deliver Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) to local, regional as well as global communities.

With the deep spirit of co-learning and co-creating of sustainable society, it laid down the firm foundation as RCE Greater Gombak focused on the niche area covering the theme of Spirituality and Indigenous knowledge, envisioning to lead the whole-of-community transformation through Sejahtera.

Within a year, RCE Greater Gombak has managed to prominently display its commitment to the vision and mission of its establishment by rooting real actions on the ground. By December 2020, it witnessed the promise to turn commitments into reality when eight (8) of RCE Greater Gombak projects have been selected to receive the 2020 RCE Awards for Innovative Projects on Education for Sustainable Development.

Each award serves as a corroboration of the commitment, heart-hardwork, and zeal of its members in collectively upholding the spirit of 'leaving no one behind,' especially in battling the unfathomable challenges against COVID-19.

This modest compilation is proof of dedication, commitment, and compassion of a well-diversified group of society, from the academe, government, NGOs, and civil society interweaving the quadruple helix model in making the world a better place for the generations to come. It is aimed at creating a platform to further spread and improve the good practices on sustainable development, and fashion them as catalysts towards the much-needed holistic transformation far and wide. More importantly, bringing with it long-lost values of compassion, kindness, and human touch as a mercy to all while humanising the world of advanced technology. As quoted from Mahatma Gandhi: "*The greatness of humanity is not in being human, but in being humane.*"

Dzulkifli Abdul Razak
Co-chair of RCE Greater Gombak, and
Rector of International Islamic University Malaysia

Foreword by
Henry Sandanam
Co-Chair of RCE Greater Gombak and
President of Perkhidmatan Sosial
Pembangunan Komuniti (PSPK)

First and foremost, it is ecstatic to experience this 1st year of successful milestones despite the pandemic. It is an honour to associate together with the academic expertise and other stakeholders in the effort of localising the 17 Sustainable Development Goals with vision to lead the Whole Community Transformation agenda. We express our appreciation to RCE Greater Gombak for rendering us the support and opportunities to work together in recognising and serving those who are in need in the community regardless of race and creed.

Perkhidmatan Sosial Pembangunan Komuniti (PSPK) as an established organisation in Gombak district will continue to provide its unconditional support to RCE Greater Gombak in the efforts towards achieving the vision in promoting and advancing natural and cultural heritage through the Real-world labs as conceptual platforms portraying selected and dedicated conservation and social cultural areas of collaboration, apart from continuous effort of community empowerment. In this journey, partners of RCE Greater Gombak had the opportunity to work together with a diverse group of stakeholders and were privileged to experience the process of community transformation directly. This will definitely leave a significant impact for the community in the Gombak District while contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

Having the experts such as Prof Emeritus Tan Sri Dato' Dzulkifli Abdul Razak as the Co-chair and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zainal Abidin Sanusi as the focal person in the Secretariat of RCE Greater Gombak is a privilege in bringing a crucial perspective by identifying and designing future actions.

As "behind every success is a great team", it is imperative to congratulate all partners and fellow teammates who have been the pillars of RCE Greater Gombak with pioneering spirit, commitment, passion and who epitomize it perfectly today.

Universities have high responsibility in the development of its surrounding community as they host expertises from various fields of knowledge. With these expertise and resources, the role of universities in leading the intellectual, economic and social development of a community is becoming more apparent. RCE Greater Gombak with International Islamic University Malaysia as its host is creating a significant pathway focusing on various philanthropic activities and providing a platform for networking and knowledge sharing among multiple stakeholders to serve and uplift the community in need with the aim of leaving no one behind.

This 1st year anniversary is just a beginning and there will be a lot more to do for years to come. This celebration also marks the amplification of our responsibility in leading the whole-community-transformation agenda. RCE Greater Gombak is a great platform for co-learning from each other's vast experience and knowledge, which shall contribute meaningfully to each partner's individual initiatives to serve the best for the community in need and empower them towards sustainability. We look forward to your continuous support and hopefully through this book, we all have solicited an idea of what the future beholds for us. As quoted from Henry Ford, *"Coming together is beginning, staying together is progress, working together is success"*. Let's work together pacing into more exciting challenges ahead for the sustainability of our community.

Henry Sandanam
Co-Chair of RCE Greater Gombak,
President of Perkhidmatan Sosial Pembangunan Komuniti (PSPK)

PREFACE

Sustainable Development Goals were first set in 2015 following the Millenium Development Goals and aims to be achieved by 2030. It was diligently designed to create a better and sustainable future for all, carrying the spirit of working collaboratively with all members of society in ensuring that no one is left behind. Six years of its implementation, this global agenda has been progressively setting its place in guiding the local context of development. Numerous strategies and action plans have been executed to achieve this agenda. Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) on Education for Sustainable Development serves as a platform for multiple stakeholders to work together in solving local development challenges, but at the same time connect to the global network in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. RCE Greater Gombak received its recognition on 1st April 2020 amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, with International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) as its host.

While sustainability used to be viewed mainly from an environmental perspective, this book aims to showcase the holistic view of sustainable development, and its alignment with Sejahtera as the local concept and spirituality as the niche area and foundation for RCE Greater Gombak. The chapters are categorized thematically according to the RCE Greater Gombak main scope of activities which are; Whole Community Transformation, spirituality and sustainability, and *Sejahtera*. All of the chapters written are the extensions, or rather the whole story of the projects submitted for 2020 RCE Awards for Innovative Projects on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

Each chapter carries its own narrative of translating the global agenda of 2030 into actions on the ground, encompassing the three pillars of sustainable development; environment, social, and economy. Although some projects aim for very specific Sustainable Development Goals or targets to achieve, there are some which aspire to embrace a broader scope of sustainability, highlighting the intertwining nature of the issue, thus justifying the need for an unconventional approach to the solution.

Diversified as it may be portrayed, these projects emerge at one common theme, which is to uphold humanity in each aspect of life. This humanity does not simply mean being a human, fulfilling daily responsibilities, but carrying with it a bigger meaning of kindness, benevolence, and justice to The Creator, other human beings, animals, mother nature, and finally the often forgotten, ourselves.

In line with the collaborative learning spirit of RCE, these projects serve as a platform for the government agencies, academia, NGOs, industrial players, and civil society to work together towards achieving a common goal of sustainable development. The quadruple helix model of stakeholders working together is crucial in ensuring the effectiveness of the project's implementation. It is not an overstatement to highlight that this 'Partnership for the Goals' as stated in SDG 17, is the key success factor of all of these projects. With the on-going battle against COVID-19, it is more apparent than ever that 'no man is an island' and the only way forward is by breaking the strongly built silos among us. The community has so many walls that the projects are trying to build bridges to create a truly sustainable society.
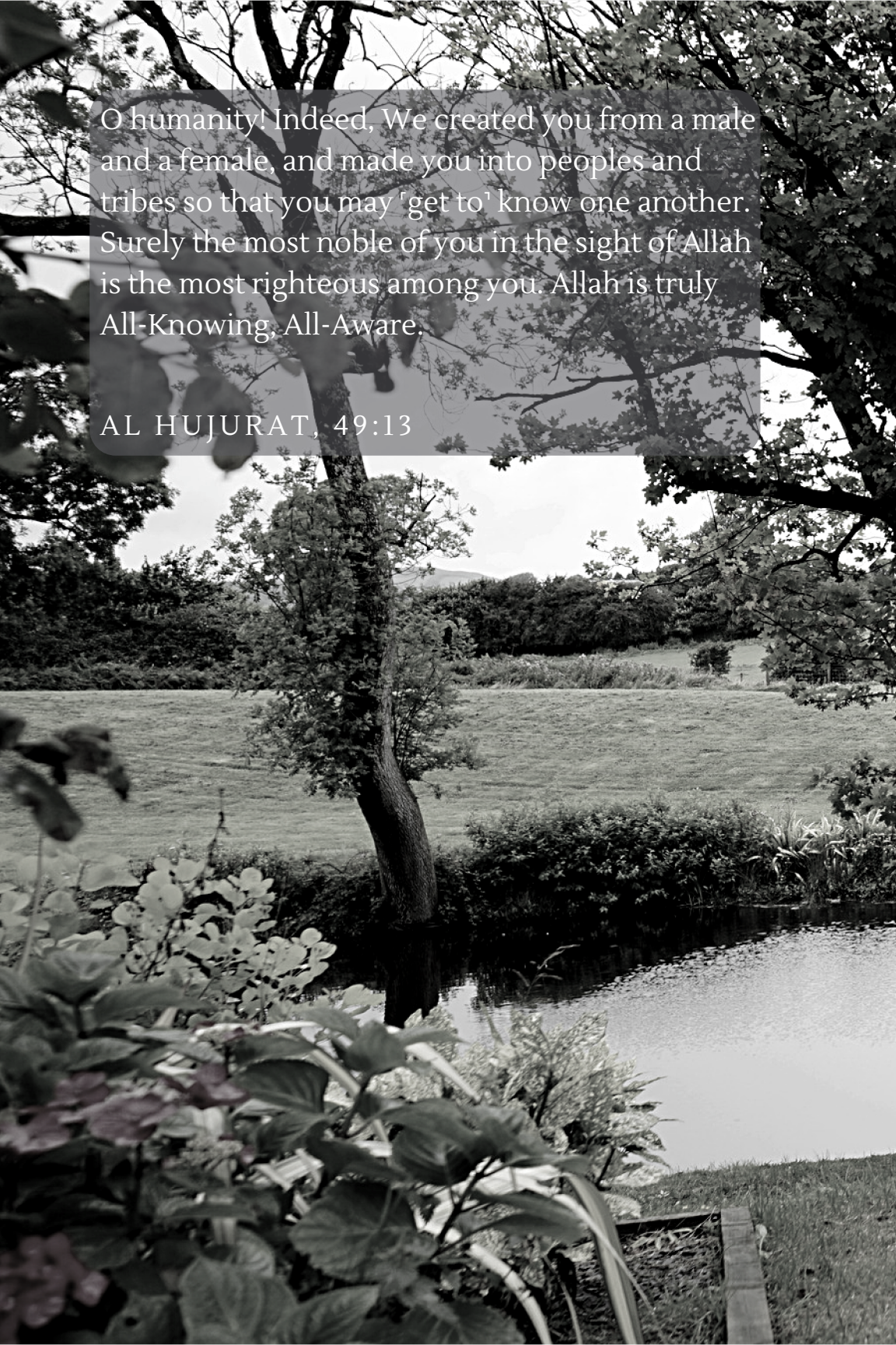
It is hoped that this book successfully illustrates a journey of one-year establishment of RCE Greater Gombak, highlighting the relentless efforts of its members in leading the whole community transformation through spirituality and Sejahtera, and how this effort goes in parallel with the agenda of International Islamic University Malaysia as its host. Reminiscing the day of receiving the recognition as Regional Centre of Expertise despite half of the world is on lock-down, this book is an attestation that despite having to adapt in a renewed normal, constantly battling between fear and hope, we can still create a beautiful place to live in when we choose solidarity and unity over isolation, greed, and selfishness.

May the projects serve as an inspiration for others to work on a university whole institution transformation (WIT) leading towards whole society transformation (WCT) and ultimately leave a bigger impact on the world.

Wan Zahidah Wan Zulkifle
Zainal Abidin Sanusi
Secretariat @ Main Focal Point of RCE Greater Gombak

O humanity! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may 'get to' know one another. Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware.

AL HUJURAT, 49:13

Section 1: Partners

PERKHIDMATAN SOSIAL DAN PEMBANGUNAN KOMUNITI (PSPK)

The Association of Social Services and Community Development of Gombak District, Selangor or also known in Malay language as Perkhidmatan Sosial Pembangunan Komuniti (PSPK) is a non-profitable welfare and charitable organisation involved in community service since 4th July 2006. It was registered under the Registrar of Societies of Malaysia and is affiliated with the Selangor Council of Welfare & Social Development and tax-exempted organisation since 2009.

Despite COVID-19 pandemic, PSPK is embarking on a significant milestone for its 15th anniversary with the slogan "Care for Community, Women in Sustainability". PSPK's vision is to empower women and children, living out their dreams with dignity & hope, thereby strengthening families and transforming communities. Their mission is to facilitate the development of underprivileged women and children irrespective of their creed and race, through life skill training and a life-changing community enhancement program with the five guiding principles;

Governed by Love, Stewardship, Effectiveness, People-Centric Approach, and Innovativeness.

PSPK embraces a four-fold aim namely; Community Development, Women Empowerment, Children Education, and Economic Restoration. Development without sustainability is of no value. Hence, PSPK is empowering women via income generation and sustainability projects to transform their lives with a renewed sense of purpose to reach their fullest potential in order to be the channels of service and support for those who are in need in the larger community.

PSPK have multiple centres of operation which are:

- PSPK Community Service Centre
- PSPK Women Development Centre (the Shelter Home for Women & Abused Mother with Children)
- PSPK Women Empowerment Centre
- PSPK Sewing Training Centre
- PSPK Bakery Training Centre
- PSPK Young Generation Centre
- PSPK Computer Learning Centre
- PSPK Tailoring Production Unit
- PSPK Bakery Production Unit
- PSPK Catering Unit
- PSPK Youth Community Café
- and the newly ventured PSPK Rooftop Gardening and PSPK Recycling Centre to champion environmental sustainability

To date, PSPK has facilitated more than 14,300 people by conducting over 2,000 programs and projects and created 780 entrepreneurship & employability opportunities.

PSPK serves the community in the Gombak District by being a support structure that empowers the community to improve their livelihood aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals with a special focus on Quality Education, Gender Equality, Decent Work & Economic Growth, Reduced Inequalities, and Partnerships for the Goals.

Upholding the spirit of SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals, the journey of PSPK with RCE Greater Gombak is indispensable. With the aims to transform and empower the community towards sustainable development ensuring that no one is left behind, PSPK is committed to upholding equity, ethics, and justice. Amidst the pandemic, the whole team of RCE Greater Gombak has shown their commitment by putting their compassion before personal comfort as it is the utmost service thus imperative in achieving the community transformation - by reaching the unreachable through various programs and projects.

The holistic approach of RCE Greater Gombak has progressively portrayed the impacts for the communities to have a better livelihood regardless of race, creed, and nation. Together with International Islamic University Malaysia as the host of RCE Greater Gombak, we are able to improve the lives of the needy people not only with the contribution of food aid and hygiene kit but also by receiving their expertise in research and education. RCE Greater Gombak also has been a great platform for us as a non-governmental organisation to collaborate and co-learn with other stakeholders. The collaboration of universities working together with the grassroots NGOs like us is seen as an exemplary way in utilizing the skills and knowledge to identify and solve the community issues, needs, and challenges faced in localizing the SDG contributing to the Whole Community Transformation agenda of RCE Greater Gombak.

MERCY MISSION MALAYSIA

Mercy Mission is a not-for-profit community development organization that pioneers education and social service programs across the world. Operating in 10 different countries across 5 continents, Mercy Mission works locally in communities seeking to educate, energize and elevate the community so that they are able to help themselves as well as their fellow citizens through organizing projects in delivering the needs of local society. Every activity which Mercy Mission seeks to undertake must contribute towards achieving one or more of our core objectives which have been selected in order to help Mercy Mission realize its vision.

OUR VISION
A world where every Muslim is able to live faithfully to their belief, building an exemplary Islamic community that benefits humanity.

OUR OBJECTIVES
- To increase piety
- To increase confidence
- To increase self-sufficiency
- To increase selflessness

Guided by the above, Mercy Mission Malaysia aims to champion educational and social services causes.

Charity Right, our flagship project within our social services portfolio, is an international food aid organisation that works in neglected communities around the world, feeding forgotten and impoverished individuals and communities. Charity Right's meal aid supports schoolchildren and adults in low-income estates, refugee camps, slums, and remote villages across Asia, Africa and Europe. Currently, Charity Right operates in Malaysia, Australia, United Kingdom, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sudan, and Turkey.

Feed To Educate, one of Charity Right's initiatives, is a comprehensive program that focuses on uplifting low-income families by eradicating poverty from the core and bringing about economic sustainability to poor households.

Involvement in RCE Greater Gombak
Through our partnership and involvement with the RCE Greater Gombak, Charity Right's Feed To Educate has been awarded RCE Recognition Award: Outstanding Flagship Project from United Nations University for its contribution to UN Sustainable Development Goal 1: No Poverty which will be further elaborated in Chapter 1.The Feed To Educate initiative is an excellent showcase of how multiple agencies and partners working together despite coming from diverse backgrounds. The monthly food assistance is distributed by Charity Right with the help of the schools. The school management, on the other hand, identifies eligible beneficiaries and monitors attendance and academic performance.IIUM, being the academic powerhouse, contributes by providing valuable insight by developing a socio-economic profile of the recipients and thus enabling them to advise and craft on suitable capacity-building programs to address their specific circumstances and needs.

Another partner of RCE Greater Gombak, LeapEd Services, leads the transformation of the schools by improving the teaching techniques of the teachers to ensure best delivery, upgrading school facilities to provide an appropriate environment which encourages learning, and community engagement programs to instil inclusivity with the parents where the changes are being implemented. Other collaborators, external to RCE Greater Gombak, also support the initiative by either adopting a school to cover the food expenses or by providing 0% interest loans to the beneficiaries' families to assist them in starting a business or expanding an existing one.

With all of these collaborations and initiatives, we hope that this will have a lasting positive impact on the beneficiaries, contributing to shared prosperity amongst all Malaysians and contributing toward achieving SDG goals for Malaysia.

MALAYSIAN INSTITUTE OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Malaysian Institute of Sustainable Agriculture was established on July 19, 2013 with the aim to assist farmers, students, and the public at large in educational, social, scientific, and charitable purposes on all subject matters related to sustainable agriculture, economic and socio- economic development or advocacy on natural farming. Founded by Mr Hud Sulaiman and Mr Ahmad Kamal Mohd Ali, this institute has grown incredibly over the past 8 years.

The objectives of its establishment include;
- To be farmers' education centre and/or one-stop centre and/or data collection centre and analyzing information related to sustainable agriculture from sources in Malaysia and abroad for use by the farmers
- To strengthen connections between farmers community and private/government agencies related to agriculture locally and internationally
- To initiate and assist Malaysian's universities, colleges and other institutions in developing the Sustainable Agriculture Curriculum and/or Training Module to suit Malaysian Ecosystem and public needs

MISA has been one of the greatest supporters for RCE Greater Gombak, way before its official recognition. Working together with the community had always been part and parcel of its establishment.

This community includes the local residents of Gombak, students from various institutions, and interested individuals. Among some of the activities conducted by MISA as follows;

- Community Development on Natural farming at Kg. Cherak Jaya, Meru, Selangor
- Natural Farming Sharing Knowledge Session with Selangor West Coast Chinese Farmers Association
- Natural farming courses for students of International Islamic College
- School yard gardening at Sek Ren Islam Al-Amin Gombak
- Training of making compost at Kg. Gagu, Kuala Kelawang, Jelebu, Negeri Sembilan
- Probiotic Ayam Kampong, Kuala Pilah, N.Sembilan
- Promotion of Home Aquaponic

Being part of RCE Greater Gombak had opened up new collaboration opportunities for MISA. Currently, there are few ongoing collaborative projects between MISA and partners of RCE Greater Gombak such as Pertubuhan Perkhidmatan Sosial dan Pembangunan Komuniti (PSPK) and Sekolah Rendah Setiabudi. MISA will continue to support and work together with other members of RCE Greater Gombak in our journey towards holistic community transformation.

SEKOLAH RENDAH SETIABUDI

Sekolah Rendah Setiabudi was established in 2020, fully owned by International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) under the subsidiary of IIUM Schools Sdn Bhd. The establishment highlights the concept of 'One Stop Center' which emphasised the integration of academic curriculum and Islamic teachings. In conjunction with the concepts, the school's mission and vision are to produce students with high moral and ethical values by providing a balanced and quality holistic education to pupils with 21st Century Education Approach (PAK21) based on the Education Philosophy (FPK). Our school motto is "Towards Holistic Excellence", where the focus is on the academic excellence, co-curriculum, character development, soft skills, and a conducive environment.

We are honoured to be part of RCE Greater Gombak, working together with various stakeholders in fulfilling the agenda of Whole Community Transformation towards sustainability. Incorporating Sejahtera as a local concept of sustainable development, below are some of our collaborative projects;

- **Laman Sejahtera**
  In our effort to achieve one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) at the school level, the school management has utilised some of its green spaces and created a Laman Sejahtera. Starting in November 2020, the school has worked hand-in-hand with Malaysian Institute of Sustainable Agriculture (MISA) to build an Aquaponic system and planted various types of vegetables and plants in Laman Sejahtera. Now, they started to produce and recently were distributed to the communities nearby. Among the produces are chilies, sissoo spinach, eggplant, lemongrass, Ulam Raja, and other plants. Moving forward, we are also planning a collaborative project with Integrated Sustainable Agriculture Farming (InSAF).

- **Recycle Program**
  On 3rd March 2021 the Sekolah Rendah Setiabudi organized a Recycle program in collaboration with Majlis Perbandaran Selayang (MPS). This program has received great support from the teachers, parents and students. During the event, the school has gained an impressive achievement with a total weight collection of 1553 kg. Among the items that were collected are coloured papers, used cooking oil, plastic bottles, boxes etc. On another note, the school was awarded as champion in Pertandingan Program Bank Kitar Semula by MPS in 2019 and also champion in Pertandingan Ecobricks 2019 Daerah Gombak (Kategori Sekolah Rendah). Sekolah Rendah Setiabudi are also now working together with RCOMM Lestari, in recycling, cleanliness and sustainability projects.

- **Insan Sejahtera Campaign**
  Our school has also taken an initiative to launch the Insan Sejahtera Campaign to our teachers and students. The campaign emphasizes on good moral values, manners, and ethics which a person should become. The school promotes a special slogan "Jom Jadi Baik – Rasulullah SAW Idolaku (Let's be kind – Rasulullah SAW as my idol) and 10S concept which is Senyum, Sapa, Salam, Sayang, Sopan, , Solat, Selawat, Sedekah, Sabar, Syukur (Smile, Greet, Shake, Love, Be Polite, Pray, Selawat, Sadaqah, Patience, Grateful). This campaign will hopefully mould our young children to become the next generation leaders as a Sejahtera and holistic person.

Every month, the three winners among the students will be selected as Pemenang Insan Sejahtera (Pelajar Mithali) who shows the good examples for others.

IIUM SCHOOLS SDN. BHD.

IIUM Schools Sdn. Bhd. (ISSB) was established in 1997 to provide an integrated and holistic education which adheres to the Islamic tenets and values at the primary, secondary and A- levels, so as to allow all children to experience learning success and become life-long learners and contributing members in the community. As a representative from IIUM School Sdn. Bhd., Mr. Kaharudin Abdul Rahman acts as a secretariat of RCE Greater Gombak.

LEAPED SERVICES SDN. BHD.

LeapEd Service Sdn. Bhd. is an award-winning social enterprise and Malaysia's first homegrown Education Service Provider. We undertake education transformation programmes and projects that support the system, school leaders, teachers, students, parents, and the wider community.

LeapEd education transformation activities are closely aligned to Malaysia's Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025 (MEB) and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The aim is to develop high-quality schools and systems, embedding the latest robust educational theories and international best practices adapted to local contexts. LeapEd strives to promote self-directed and engaged life-long learners with holistic 21st-century competencies. LeapEd also works closely with strategic partners – Yayasan AMIR and the Ministry of Education Malaysia, in a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) that focuses on whole-school transformation and student-centered learning, to unlock the individual potential of every learner.

Since the establishment in 2010, LeapEd has designed and implemented various education models such as the District Transformation Programme-AMAN (DTP-AMAN), Islamic School Enhancement Programme (ISEP), Ground-up School Transformation (GUSTO) programme, Program Sekolah Transformasi (PreSTasi) as well as the nation's pioneering Trust School Programme (TSP).

Since its inception, these programmes have benefited over 160,000 students, 7,000 teachers and leaders in 160 schools across 13 states nationwide. The partnership with RCE Greater Gombak illustrates that LeapEd Services committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality Education specifically on Education for Sustainable Development.

LeapEd is part of the Whole Community Transformation through Feed to Educate project together with Mercy Mission Malaysia and International Islamic University Malaysia with our focus mainly on capacity building of the teachers and improving the schools.

LeapEd has a team of 100+ dedicated professionals with subject matter experts from Malaysia and around the world, who have worked in or with education systems across the ASEAN region, Europe, China, the Middle East, North America, and Africa. Contact us if you are a:

- Corporate, NGO, or a Foundation looking to make a meaningful and measurable social impact through education
- Ministry of Education or public institution looking to build capacity and enhance the education system
- School Leader, Teacher or corporate executive looking for professional development programmes
- Parent group or Alumni association looking to improve student outcomes and wellbeing

RCOMM LESTARI

RCOMM Lestari is a non-governmental organisation which focuses on public education and awareness on sustainable waste management as an effort to mainstream recycling practice among Malaysian since 2010. The founder, Mrs. Miza Pawan Chik is one of those noble individuals who supported the efforts towards RCE Greater Gombak establishment, way before its actual recognition. Although we are saddened by the demise of Mrs. Miza, we are honoured for the support and love received from her until the very last day of life. This is a tribute to her undying passion and commitment in mainstreaming sustainability especially pertaining to environmental sustainability.

The late Mrs Pawan Chik, or better known among RCE Members as Miza, is a strong and enthusiastic expert in waste management. She championed sustainability using Sejahtera narrative in daily life practice through Recycle Committee (RCOMM) Lestari focusing on community education in sustainable waste management. World Cleanup Day is one of the significant events that surely leave a lasting impact to the community.

International Islamic University Malaysia had been given a precious opportunity to host the event in Cherok Paloh, Pahang in 2019 together with RCOMM Lestari. This event successfully brought together academia, local community and industries in efforts towards environmental sustainability, and caring for our beach.

Recent collaborative project is between RCOMM Lestari and Setiabudi School where RCOMM Lestari offer their expertise in recycling and waste management for the school.

The recycling initiatives at Setiabudi School have been going on for some time now and guidance from the experts surely brings an improvement and new perspective to the issue.

Although Mrs. Miza is no longer part of our journey, we believe that she had left a strong legacy and RCOMM Lestari will continue her aspiration and good work, going hand in hand with other members of RCE Greater Gombak towards realizing the agenda of Whole Community Transformation towards sustainability through spirituality and Sejahtera. We pray that she is rewarded abundantly for her great work and she is placed in the highest paradise.

PERSATUAN JARINGAN ISLAM GLOBAL MASA DEPAN

JREC or Persatuan Jaringan Islam Global Masa Depan is registered with the Registry of Societies (ROS) of Malaysia in 2012. We are a Non-governmental organization that focuses on quality and inclusive education for all, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education).

CONCERNS:
1. To provide education opportunity to every marginalised child, refugee in specific
2. To help nurture great potentials among the children
3. To convert beneficiaries into benefactors
4. To develop future leaders for their people

MAIN PROJECTS:
- **REC Schools (Primary and Secondary Education)**
  Beginning 2010, primary and secondary education that benefit more than 800 Rohingya children are offered at five REC schools in four states in Peninsular Malaysia: Penang (2010), Klang (2012), Kuantan (2015), Gombak (2018), and Kuala Terengganu (2019).
- **Teacher Compensation Programme (TCP)**
  Since 2018 JREC has been entrusted by the UNHCR to assist in monitoring, training, and compensate 56 teachers at 26 UNHCR-registered refugee learning centres.

- **Skill Training**
  Essential life skills through sewing classes are provided to teenage children and also to young women from the Rohingya communities.
- **Work Preparedness Workshops (WPW)**
  The participants (adult Rohingya) are prepared with learning modules that will broaden their view of the local context to promote peaceful coexistence when they enter employment and during their stay with the host communities.

FIVE-YEAR FOCUS AREAS (STRATEGIC PLANS)
  1. Education Development
  2. Parents Engagement
  3. Community Development (refugees and locals)
  4. JREC Organizational Capacity

APPROACHES
This includes smart partnerships and collaborations with various parties such as the UNHCR, Lembaga Zakat, local NGOs, and higher learning institutions. The latest initiative is the endorsement as a partner of RCE Greater Gombak by acting as a real-world lab for migrant-related issues that connects the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) Community with Rohingya Community-related organizations. It involves teaching and learning-research collaboration, Migrant Toolkit Project as well as other community engagement activities between JREC and IIUM.

Welcoming RCE G2
New Partners

INSTITUT PENDIDIKAN GURU MALAYSIA

&

GLOBAL PEACE MISSION MALAYSIA

'A'isha, the wife of Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him), reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: 'A'isha, verily Allah is kind and He loves kindness and confers upon kindness which he does not confer upon severity and does not confer upon anything else besides it (kindness).

SAHIH MUSLIM, 2593

Section 2: Whole-Community Transformation

1 Whole Community Transformation Through 'Feed To Educate'

By Wan Zahidah Wan Zulkifle

Introduction

Over the decade, the income gap among different groups of society has been widening significantly. This unfortunate phenomenon is happening not only in certain areas of the world, but globally as well. While the impact of the widened income gap is apparent in the economic aspect, it is also detrimental to the social aspect, particularly education. Education has been regarded as a basic human right since 1948 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Despite the declaration decades ago, UNESCO (2018) released the fact that one in every five children, adolescents, and youth is out of school. Specifically for primary school, the rate had been almost stagnant without much improvement since the past decade, with 9% of children of primary school age (about 6 to 11 years), or 63 million, are out of school. Various factors had been studied and linked to the dropout and truancy, and one particular factor of interest here is poverty.

Children from low-income families are at higher risk of dropping out of school and forced to give up on education and absorbed into the workforce to fulfill survival needs. Feed to Educate is a long-term Food Aid Programme to help the family in need with the condition that the caretakers need to ensure the attendance of the children to school. Failure to do so will result in discontinuation of the help received. In line with SDG 1 which main concern is poverty eradication, this programme is based on the aspiration that education is the solution for getting out of poverty. By providing food assistance, it will not just reduce the financial burden, but it will facilitate proper nutrition and growth of the children and ultimately help them to focus on their study.

The Background

Perlis is the smallest state in Malaysia with a population of 254400. With its western coastline bordering Straits of Malacca, fishing serves as a main source of income for a large group of residents apart from office work and industrial work.

The unemployment rate is 3.3% which is similar to Malaysian population in general. Perlis is special because it is not just located at the coastline; it also harbours paddy fields which is a source of staple food in Malaysia i.e rice. There are 74 public primary schools with around 22950 students in Perlis.

Perlis is considered a less-developed state with around 30,900 people categorized as the B40 (household income less than RM3000) and poverty rate of 0.2% according to the Economic Planning Unit of the Prime Minister's Department in 2014. Although the poverty rate seems low, the household income does not reflect the overall household poverty of the local community. Poverty is not solely an economic challenge as it carries with it social challenges such as access to education and a younger age of joining the workforce. Inevitably, health and wellbeing are affected due to affordability issues and limited access to healthcare services.

'Feed to Educate' is a noble effort by Mercy Mission Malaysia since 2017. This programme was designed to alleviate hunger from poverty-stricken households by providing monthly food-aid to enable the beneficiaries and their families to sustain without relying on their children for supplemental income, thus enabling them to focus on their study (Feed to Educate, 2021). This programme is based on the aspiration that education is the solution for these young children and their family to get out of poverty. The programme was conducted in five schools in Perlis, the smallest state in Malaysia and hoped to showcase a good example to be replicated in other states later.

As of 2018, SK Simpang Ampat has 687 students in total, with 471 of them receiving government assistance. 58 of them are orphans and few students were diagnosed with disabilities such as Down Syndrome, blindness and learning disabilities. In this Charity Right programme, 100 receivers from SK Simpang Ampat are selected as the eligible recipient.

Out of 100 students assisted, 69 are of the poor category, 19 are orphans, and 12 are considered people with disabilities (OKU). The average income per head is RM 122.70 per month. Looking into the impact of this programme, overall, there has been an increase in both academic performance (4.38%) and attendance (0.88%). Two students were able to get 6As in the final exams, while those who used to score 6E managed to perform better during the final examinations.

Home visit to one of Charity Right's recipients

International Islamic University Malaysia, as a higher education institution proudly supports this effort and was honoured for the opportunity to collaborate with Mercy Mission Malaysia in this programme starting May 2019. IIUM becomes a team player in this programme through research and mapping of sociodemographic profiling of the recipients to ensure a more holistic approach to the issue. LeapEd Services contributed in transforming the school into Trust School and improved its curriculum and teaching force while fundings came from the Islamic Council of Perlis. This programme is a showcase of multi-stakeholders collaboration in the effort to eradicate poverty on the ground.

Whole Community Transformation Through 'Feed To Educate'

Initially, the objective was providing monthly food assistance to children of needy so that they could stay in education. The programme has now moved beyond merely providing long-term relief to include research-led community engagement by the university students and capacity building for the teachers. The research mainly aims to develop a socio-economic profiling of the recipients to ensure a more holistic view of the whole situation. In a nutshell, it now aims to eradicate poverty in line with SDG 1 by empowering the parents to be financially independent and enabling the students to access quality education delivered by a credible teaching team.

The monthly food assistance is distributed by Mercy Mission Malaysia with the help of the schools. School managements are responsible for monitoring the attendance and the eligibility of recipients. University students from IIUM act as facilitators in student enhancement programmes in school and at the same time stay with the foster family i.e family of the recipient. During the stay, they collected data for the purpose of sociodemographic profiling. The analyzed data and profiles were then used to plan capacity building programmes for the parents and serves as the basis for inviting other stakeholders in the collaboration. LeapEd Services leads the transformation of the schools by improving the teaching techniques of the teachers to ensure best delivery.

Collaborative learning is incorporated into the project as different stakeholders work hand in hand to eradicate poverty and at the same time ensuring the current education system is not leaving behind the less fortunate. This collaboration is not merely for providing assistance, but it serves as a platform for each stakeholder to co-learn from each other. This project led to a deeper understanding of SDG, helping each partner solve sustainability issues at local level. Apart from that, using RCE as a platform opens up opportunities for wider networking with other stakeholders including potential research-based solutions and findings.

Specifically for Mercy Mission Malaysia, nutrition experts from IIUM have facilitated them to improve their food aid by substituting some of the food with a better and more nutritious alternative. This new food choice is more suitable for healthy growth of children. In short, collaboration with IIUM is not just on the research part, but on the improvement of the existing structure of the project.

The project is beautifully crafted to ensure the outcome of the whole project is not just contributing to poverty eradication, but a whole community transformation towards sustainable development. In essence, it is the perfect showcase of mainstreaming education for sustainable development in the local community.

Role of RCE

This project adopted the quadruple helix approach of RCE as the modus operandi. Each of the project partners has their role to play. Mercy Mission Malaysia is in charge of searching funding to provide the monthly food assistance. The team then liaises with schools (SK Simpang Ampat, SK Padang Keria, SK Seberang Ramai) to select eligible recipients of the monthly assistance. Schools' teachers and parents-teachers association will screen and investigate the socioeconomic status of potential recipients to ensure eligibility and no one is left behind. The food aid pack is given monthly by Mercy Mission Malaysia. As the food assistance comes with a condition that the students need to maintain their attendance to school, the recipients' attendance will be monitored by the school management. The monthly attendance will determine the continuity of the assistance received. That is how Feed to Educate started.

The establishment of RCE Greater Gombak further expanded this project by the collaboration formed between Mercy Mission Malaysia, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and LeapEd Services. LeapEd Services is entrusted to transform the whole school system. LeapEd focuses on training for teachers, improving the school curriculum, introducing various programmes to promote love for education among students and Trust School (network of selected schools undergoing transformation process to become an excellent school) programme. Realising the need for a research component in the whole programme, IIUM introduced research-led community engagement, which involved the Foster Family Programme. Through this programme, university students are placed with the family of recipients of Charity Right assistance for a two-day stay. Apart from getting to know the family better, the students are required to collect research data, which ultimately contribute to the development of a database to capture the real situation of the family of recipients. Indirectly, the university students are exposed to realities on the ground to relate and reflect the formal education they receive in the classroom. The data collected is analysed to develop socioeconomic-health profiling of the family of recipients and will be used for decision making and further improvement of the whole project.

In short, all the three organisations involved have their own specialisation in the whole transformation process ensuring a holistic approach to the presented issue; Mercy Mission as the main funding agency, LeapED Services to provide organisational management and transformation advice to the school, and IIUM to deliver motivational programmes for students and research component to the project.

The collaborative learning spirit embedded in the project enables anyone to learn from each other, and with one another, leaving the traditional setting of education as only in the formal classroom setting and integrating more learning through the discovery component of ESD. This project also puts an emphasis on practice-oriented learning, where theory and concept of sustainable development is linked with real experience.

This model of collaborative learning and community empowerment is a good model for replication as it integrates the economy, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development into the project as part of transformative education. As this project focuses on two crucial goals i.e. poverty eradication and quality education in an integrated model, it opens up opportunities for collaboration from various stakeholders, locally, nationally and globally. RCE, being a global platform will facilitate the knowledge sharing process, and ultimately opens up to more collaboration to strengthen the current programme in place.

Group activities with students of SK Simpang Empat and SK Padang Keria

The Impact and Challenges

The impact of the whole project is beyond what numbers could capture. Apart from the overall increase in both academic performance (4.38%) and attendance (0.88%) and two students were able to get 6As in the final exams, while those who used to score 6E managed to perform better during the final exams, the parents' and students' attitude towards education is the real gem gained from this project. This is captured during the engagement session with the parents conducted by IIUM team, where most parents voice out their concern and dream to continue providing education for the children. Another heartwarming finding during the research-led community engagement is the spirit and motivation portrayed by the parents to increase their earning and not just depending on the assistance.

The feedback from university students after joining the Foster Family programme is beyond inspirational. Most of them agree that such experience serves as an eye-opener to the real situation on the ground and makes them more grateful. Others highlight how valuable the lesson they gained during the programme, something a textbook could not capture. In essence, the spirit of education for sustainable development is fully embedded in the whole project.

Apart from that, what could be highlighted is the synchronisation and synergy of three stakeholders with different nature working together to make this project a success. An NGO, a social enterprise and academia are on the same page for this project, going against the long-standing idea of university as an ivory tower. This is part of the Whole Community Transformation towards sustainable society agenda by RCE Greater Gombak. This agenda focuses on transforming and empowering the community towards sustainable development at all levels of community in line with the spirit of 'leaving-no-one-behind' in upholding equity, ethics and justice.

As this project continues to grow and expand, it is now being replicated in other states in Malaysia. Future planning includes replicating the project in Selangor, which will involve indigenous schools as the target groups. More related agencies such as Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia and the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia will be brought together in the process of making the project more sustainable and holistic. In a nutshell, this project has tremendous potential to grow and involve more stakeholders from RCEs around the world.

Showcasing the Beauty of Islam and IIUM Agenda

Whole Community Transformation through 'Feed to Educate' is a beautiful story of how kindness, compassion and altruism leads to a meaningful and impactful change to society.

It all started with a genuine concern on the future generations, specifically on their education and health. In line with Sustainable Development Goal 1 on eradicating poverty, the ultimate aim is to facilitate the society to get out of poverty and be financially sustained. Islam put a great emphasis on showing kindness and compassion to others in removing them from hardships. As Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings upon him) said;

> *"If anyone relieves a Muslim believer from one of the hardships of this worldly life, Allah will relieve him of one of the hardships of the Day of Resurrection. If anyone makes it easy for the one who is indebted to him (while finding it difficult to repay), Allah will make it easy for him in this worldly life and in the Hereafter, and if anyone conceals the faults of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his faults in this world and in the Hereafter. Allah helps His slave as long as he helps his brother." (The Hadith, n.d.)*

The aspiration to ensure continuity of education, food security and financial sustainability are in line with the principles of Protection of Life and Intellect in Maqasid Al-Shariah. Food is a basic necessity for the normal physiological functioning of the human body to take place. Not being able to afford food because of the financial instability will not just disrupt the normal physiological functioning but eventually take a toll on one's mental wellbeing. Ensuring continuity of education is also part of the effort that contributes to Hifz al-'Aql or Protection of Intellect.

Looking at a bigger perspective, the involvement of university students in this programme not only gives them real-life experience but also contributes in building their character. International Islamic University Malaysia does not define success of the graduates merely by looking at the employability rate, but the development of *Insan Sejahtera*, a balanced person whose cognitive, physio-psychological, intellectual and spiritual dimensions are in harmony with each other and this harmony of inner self in turn enables them to function well with their surroundings.

The person will be in harmony with the ecological, economic, cultural and societal elements and this in turn enhances the individual's awareness of his or her relationship with the Creator (International Islamic University Malaysia, 2021). Moving out from the traditional classroom or textbook style of learning, this programme exposed the students to experiential learning, which is part of Education for Sustainable Development, and highlighted in the new Sejahtera Academic Framework.

SK Simpang Empat and SK Padang Keria Community with Facilitators
and Director of Sejahtera Centre, IIUM

Conclusion

Poverty eradication has been a long-standing global effort. The traditional way of giving 'fish' in the form of stipends may no longer be adequate to serve as a long-term solution. Whole Community Transformation through 'Feed to Educate' aspire to approach the issue in a more holistic manner, in which the focus of the programme is not solely on surviving monthly financial need, but capacity building and preparing the beneficiaries to be financially independent and stable and at the same time embedding values for university students to be not only a person with academic excellence, but full of compassion and kindness towards others. While the tangible could be measured by the number of students receiving recipients, or the percentage of academic performance improvement, the intangible impact of transforming the whole community is what makes this programme a unique one, worthy to be awarded with Outstanding Flagship Project for 2020 RCE Awards for Innovative Projects on Education for Sustainable Development (Global RCE Network, 2020).

2

Capacity Building Towards Achieving Sustainable Development Goals – The Cases of Tg. Piai and Bentong

By Zainal Abidin Sanusi

Introduction

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is an ambitious but noble agenda to bring global community together in addressing the complexity of unsustainable development issues taking place around the world. The world has seen many global agendas championed by various international organisations but not few of them have failed because of the lack of support from participating countries. In many cases, although the agenda has successfully been cascaded to national level, it stays at planning level. Hence SDG will not be achieved, or it will take longer time to reach its target. There can be at least two factors for this; political will and insufficient knowledge and capacity to translate the agenda into action. Political will is not just a statement of commitment from a particular country. It must be translated to a concrete action plan to ensure that the commitment is cascaded down into the lowest entity in the community. Here is where a concrete, continuous and structured capacity building is very critical to SDGs. For the SDG targets to be obtainable, diverse stakeholders need the technical, institutional and organizational capacity to implement the wide variety of initiatives covered under these goals. All these capacities need to be contextualised to the local socio-economic condition of the society and sub-community. It is for this purpose that a specific and pre-designed capacity building programme is organised for selected parliamentary constituencies.

This capacity building programme is under a bigger national initiative and platform called All Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia SDG (APPGM-SDG) with the main objective of mainstreaming and further localising SDG agenda at all levels. In 2020, the APPGM-SDG has identified 10 parliamentary constituencies as project venues. Specifically, there are two main objectives of the programme. The first objective is to introduce Sustainable Development Goals ideally to all levels and different stakeholders in the local community such as the local government agencies, NGOs and community leaders.

Second objective is to break the silos among the stakeholders, which is found to be one of the most important reasons behind many issues of sustainable development. Prior to the capacity building programme, constituency-based research was carried out by a team appointed by APPGM-SDG secretariat. This team includes academia as local researcher, programme coordinator, representatives of APPGM-SDG secretariat and subject matter experts. This team conducted situational analysis and mapping of the unsustainable development issues at the local constituency level.

The outcome of the research is used as a guidance to propose capacity building programmes and solution projects for the constituency.

The Capacity Building Programme

Specifically, this capacity building programme is designed to be highly contextual in content, but very pragmatic in delivery. It is a full-day workshop which is divided into 3 sessions – Introduction to SDG, Local Issues of SDG and Project Proposal for Local SDG Issues. The first part – Introduction to SDG - is mainly to expose the stakeholders to global and national perspectives on SDG by highlighting the universality of the agenda, regardless of developed or less-developed countries. The session also emphasised that development is necessary and a right of everyone regardless of race, religion and background. Hence, SDG should not be politicised but must serve as neutral ground instead to bring everyone into common ground and understanding to work together and putting aside political affiliation. Once a common agenda is agreed on, the next Session is to localise the understanding into their own locality. Here is where the outcome of the research being carried out earlier will be presented to the participants. This process is very critical to get them into action mode by the realisation that SDG is affecting their locality and they have no option but to play their roles as well.

The third session is the most important exercise in building their capacity whereby the participants must apply the knowledge acquired to develop a solution project proposal for the problem identified earlier. For this purpose, the participants must not only identify the issues themselves but also propose the key players required in solving the issue. As the issue usually requires inter-agency involvement, feedback and input from the related agencies were obtained immediately during the discussion. These activities serve as a platform for them to start talking to each other and work together to solve local development issues. As the spirit of SDG is collaboration and working together, this programme aims to inculcate the value and spirit among the participants. At the end of the session, each group needs to present their findings and discussion with all the participants. The workshop also includes a fun way of learning about SDG through games. It is hoped that through this fun and engaging delivery mode, the participant will learn the most and even be able to share the knowledge and skills with other members of their community.

The capacity building programme in Tanjung Piai was the first one to be conducted and it was replicated at Bentong and to other constituencies afterwards. In Tg. Piai, there were 29 participants representing 20 agencies including NGO and community members. While in Bentong, 29 participants joined the session representing 16 agencies. Although generally, the number of attendees is considered small, it was representative of authorities and local communities, a good mixture of people who are crucial in ensuring the success of mainstreaming SDG. Although the number of participants was initially targeted to be bigger, the programme was conducted successfully. Participation and engagement from attendees were encouraging despite coming from various backgrounds. This programme could be further improved if we managed to get more participants especially from government agencies. All in all, this workshop achieved its targeted objectives in serving as an introductory course for the understanding of the general concept of SDG and identifying how it is related to their position in society.

Achievement, Impact, and Challenges

As in all other capacity building programmes, it is very critical to measure the impact. For this purpose, a pre- and post-test on knowledge on SDG was administered to measure the effectiveness of the programme in introducing SDG to the participants. A pre-test on knowledge on SDG was conducted during the Introduction slot and post-test using the same questionnaire was conducted at the end of the programme. The result shows a significant increase in the score of questionnaires on SDG knowledge after the completion of the workshop. A Wilcoxon-signed ranks test was conducted to measure the difference in the score of pre- and post-test as $N<30$. A Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test indicated that the score of post-tests is statistically significantly higher than pre-test, $Z=4.021$, $p<0.001$ for Tg Piai and $Z=3.23$, $p<0.001$ for Bentong. This affirms that there was an increase in the knowledge on SDG after the completion of the programme. This result proves that with a properly planned and contextualised module, a community can be mobilised to move towards achieving SDG.

But of course, there is always room for improvement in optimising the impact of the programme. There are several success factors that can be identified in overcoming those challenges encountered during planning and execution of the programme until post-programme follow up activities.

Capacity Building at Tanjung Piai, Johor

Success Factor for SDG Capacity Building Programme

The success of the capacity building programme for SDG is dependent on several factors. Throughout the process of delivering the programme, there are at least three aspects that are worth to be highlighted as important success factors in designing and delivering capacity building programmes.

First, the design of the programme must be customised to the needs and nature of each group. Given that SDG issues are naturally multistakeholder, the programme must recognise the diversity among them, yet able to bring them into agreement to act on the issues. For this purpose, there are four specific components that need to be included in designing the programme – knowledge for and about SDG, attitude towards SDG, values critical to SDG and most importantly, action for SDG. It is for this reason that all capacity building programmes for APPGM-SDG are conducted by experts of the subjects and with involvement of researchers who have done profiling of the community and identified important SDG issues for that constituency. This is very critical to contextualise and provide a limit to the broad issues of SDG.

The second important component is pedagogy or delivery of the programme. It is expected that the audiences will range from very young communities until senior citizens, government officers and local agencies who may have different approaches and opinions on SDG issues. Hence, conducting an effective session with such a group of attendees requires not only mastery in content, but also good trainer or facilitator skills. The five programmes carried out in 2020 were run by both – subject matter experts and trained facilitators. Methods being used are both heads-on (introduction to basic concept of SDG) and hands-on(practical).

The third highlight is to have a balanced representation among the participants of the programme. SDG issues are multidisciplinary and multisectoral. Silos' working culture among the implementing agencies have been one of the most important reasons that impede solutions to local SDG issues. Hence, in all capacity building programmes conducted for APPGM-SDG, best attempts have been made to ensure representation from four stakeholders of SDG – the community/civil society, government agencies, universities and business players. In these APPGM-SDG programmes for capacity building, we have secured participation from at least three groups – the community members, the NGO and government officers from both state and federal. Participation from these three groups has enabled better understanding and more practical possible solutions to the issues faced in the community.

Challenges in Delivery of Capacity Building Programme for SDG
Throughout the process of delivering the capacity building programme in different constituencies, there were several challenges encountered that need to be addressed for a more effective and impactful programme in 2021.

First – while quality of participation is more critical than number of participants, a small number will still affect the outcome of the planned module and motivation of the trainer. Therefore, it is suggested that participation in the programme must be made compulsory for the government agencies as part of their required on-job training programme. As for the community members, although there is encouraging participation from them, the challenge is to contextualise the issue to their sphere of influence, moving up from awareness level of training. In Tg. Piai and Bentong, a certificate with International Islamic University Malaysia's logo has served as a good attraction that encourages wider involvement from the community.

Second challenge faced is to segregate the level of contents to suit different levels of participants. The module may be designed to address inter-group diversity, but not intra-group such as different levels of background knowledge among the community members. Hence, one of the possible solutions to this challenge is to group them into different training levels which is possible, but it requires the CB programme to be run several times. This will cause logistic issues for the training team although it can be an effective solution.

Capacity Building at Bentong, Pahang

Third challenge is to ensure that change takes place after the training, even at the level of understanding. SDG is a complex and interconnected issue even among the highly educated members. But this does not mean that the common people cannot understand it fully. The challenge is the inability of the trainer to speak layman language which hinders such important topics to be understood by the community member. Such was the challenge during the mainstreaming programme at Tg.Piai and Bentong. The challenge was overcame by allowing flexibility in content delivery without using sophisticated SDG terms and developmental jargon while maintaining the delivery of SDG spirits and values using local concept such as Sejahtera. The fourth challenge is to cascade the capacity building programme to lower levels or other groups of people so that ultimately, awareness and action for SDG accumulate for better impact in the community. However, the job of spreading awareness on SDG to other members can be very challenging until there is strong buying in and a good showcase within the vicinity for everyone to evaluate the impact.

Capacity Building as Common Platform for Solving Common Local Sustainable Development Issues

Sustainable development is a highly interconnected issue that requires all stakeholders who represent diverse interests to come together to propose potential solutions. In the case of Tg. Piai, the research team has identified a list of issues ranging from waste management problem to mangrove forest which is gradually being affected by polluted seawater. Although the issues can be categorised into the three dimensions of sustainable development – economy, environment and social – they are all interconnected and the solution requires participation from all sectors of local authorities and different members of local community. To address the need for interconnectedness, the programme has at its best brought as many stakeholders as possible to break the silo working style among all agencies which has been the main constraint to achieve SDG. The programme serves as the bridge to allow different stakeholders to understand each other's perspective and constraints in addressing the identified issues. The issues identified are not newly found challenges but the approach to solve them has been fragmented that it does not address the root causes. SDGs, with its nature and scope that are meant to address complex issues, is the best platform to gather multiple stakeholders, namely both federal and state government agencies, NGOs and local communities to address complex development problems and work together for solutions. Many of the participants admitted that they were not aware of some of the initiatives mentioned by other agencies' representatives that attended the programme. Many of the participants voiced that if such a multistakeholder meeting is made as a regular platform, it will help to solve many miscommunication or lack of information problems that have been a major factor in delivering effective and efficient development programmes.

In SDG discourse, the approach of bringing multistakeholder together is known as quadruple helix. Generally, in any development issues, it is common to expect differences in opinion and delivery style.

These differences can cause a well-planned development programme not being able to achieve its intended objectives. In numerous cases, it is left to the local authority to solve the problem. In such a situation, it is dependent on how effective and capable the local authorities are to bring different parties with diverse opinions together. Among the local authorities, it can be observed that it is not a common practice among them to bring all three other stakeholders - community members, researchers or academia and business interest groups to the consultation table. Such effort requires political will and seems to be ambitious.

But it is the remaining factor that has not yet become a mainstream action in ensuring effective delivery of development projects, despite has always been recognised as a major stumbling block. The capacity building programme has really been an eye opener for those agencies on the need to come together and recognise different opinions, but for the same common purpose of SDG.

Capacity Building Programme as Showcase of IIUM Mission and Maqasid Al-Shariah in Action

This capacity building programme, in general, aims at providing better understanding of SDGs among the stakeholders in Tg. Piai and Bentong in the context of their locality. Therefore, it contributes to all SDG but specifically it can be considered as highlighting the importance of partnership as in SDG 17 – and SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

From an Islamic perspective, the need to build strong partnership and working together regardless of religion and ethnic background is highly recognised and advocated for as long as it is for the good deeds and not contradictory to Islamic shariah. This is the fundamental message of Islam that it is not just a religion, but a way of life that is meant to give mercy to all, not just Muslim - rahmatan lil ʿālamīn.

Islam clearly emphasises the same need to ensure that Muslim organisations are strong institution, professional and efficient since Islam is not just about belief, but more importantly how the belief are translated into or best of ʿamāl (action). This is in line with the Hadith of the Prophet;

> *Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came across some people who were sitting. So he said: "Shall I not inform you of the best of you from your worst?'" They became silent, so he said that three times, then a man said: 'Of course, O Messenger of Allah! Inform us of the best among us from our worst.' He said: 'The best of you is the one whose goodness is hoped for and people are safe from his evil. And the worst of you is he whose goodness is not hoped for, and people are not safe from his evil."*
> *(The Hadith - Tirmidhi).*

How do these two objectives of strong partnership and strong institutions expected to be operationalised in a Muslim life? Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah through its five principles serve as the guidelines for action in the group. Practically, the spirit of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah is translated through several key operational concepts. One of them, specifically in the context of SDG 16 and SDG 17 is the concept of musyawwarah (loosely translated as consultation) is an important practice among Muslim for decision making process. In such process, all stakeholders are gathered and consulted to express their respective opinions before a collective decision is made based on maqāṣid al-sharī'ah. During the process as well, the concept of mujādalah must be adhered to. In this concept, there is a set of ethics for good discourse that must be practiced among the members of the discussion. If there is disagreement, the conflict must be resolved by upholding the maqāṣid al-sharī'ah as the main determinants. It is through this spirit that the partnership among members of society is garnered as the foundation for social cohesion and solidarity.

Working with each other for good cause regardless of everyone's background is strongly advocated in Islam and serve as the very fundamental building block to ensure not only social cohesion among Muslim community, but between Muslim and non-Muslim to prove that Islam is indeed rahmatan lil 'ālamīn.

All the five purposes of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah are being applied throughout the discourse in the programme, but in a universal reference since the participants of the programme are very diverse in terms of belief and religious practices and background. The concept of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah is being introduced indirectly as the fundamental of human existence namely the need for protection of life, protection of wealth and property, protection of faith, protection of progeny and to protect and develop the intellect.

The approach of the capacity building is very contextualised. This is based on the Islamic concept of fiqh al-wāqi'' whereby the problem that exists must be solved based on the scenario at the locality where the problem arises, but not at the compromise of the abovementioned maqāṣid al-sharī'ah. The concept of 'urf - term referring to the custom, or 'knowledge', of a given society is another important concept that highlights and justifies the importance of local tradition and the need for seeing things from a very local context. Within the same spirit, another important concept in Islam that provides ample room for dynamism in Islamic based solution is the concept of rukhsoh – loosely translated as flexibility.

Based on this concept, Islam allows exemption of certain ruling as long as it is still within the objective of maqāṣiḍ. Here is where the function and dynamics of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah can be realised to illustrate that Islam is always compatible with any current issues.

This capacity building programme is also a perfect platform to put IIUM mission into action. IIUM has 7 missions namely,

- To undertake the special and greatly needed task of reforming the contemporary Muslim mentality and integrating Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences in a positive manner.
- To produce better quality intellectuals, professionals and scholars by integrating the qualities of faith (īmān), knowledge ('ilm), and good character (akhlāq) to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in the Muslim world.
- To foster the Islamicisation of the ethics of Muslim academic and administrative staff of IIUM, and certain aspects of human knowledge - particularly in the social sciences and humanities - with the view to making them more useful and more relevant to the Muslim Ummah.
- To nurture the quality of holistic excellence which is imbued with Islamic moral-spiritual values, in the process of learning, teaching, research, consultancy, publication, administration and student life.
- To exemplify an international community of dedicated intellectuals, scholars, professionals, officers and workers who are motivated by the Islamic worldview and code of ethics as an integral part of their work culture.
- To enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilisation dialogues in Malaysia as well as across communities and nations.
- To develop an environment that instils commitment for life-long learning and a deep sense of social responsibility among staff and students.

From the above seven missions, the capacity building programme has served as a good opportunity to translate specifically mission 2, 6 and 7. Mission number 2 is about translating faith (imān), knowledge ('ilm), and good character (akhlāq) among IIUM communities into action that will contribute towards sustainable development in Malaysia and in the Muslim world.

The programme was specifically aimed to share the knowledge and action plan for sustainable development with the local community of Tg. Piai. More than that, given the diverse background of the participants in terms of culture and religious belief, the mission of enhancing intercultural

understanding and dialogue is fulfilled concurrently throughout the session. Mission number 7 – deep sense of social responsibility – is the most obvious contribution of the programme. This mission is the most challenging but the most impactful since it gave a good impression to the community that IIUM is not just another ivory tower.

TG Piai and Bentong Capacity Building as Nucleus for RCE Greater Gombak Whole Community Transformation Agenda

The project is admittedly small in scale, but the agenda aims at bigger objectives. It is about how education and awareness can bring about change to a small group and transform them into agents of change for their community. From the small, transformed community of Tg.Piai, if they are multiplied in many other constituencies, there will be more and more people who are fully aware of the need for SDG and collectively, the whole society will slowly transform itself to a more sustainable society. Transformation for sustainable development undoubtedly needs a good practice or showcase, more than just discussion about it, to prove that change for SDGs is not impossible.

Transforming the whole community is impossible if individuals in the community are not ready to change. Hence, change for sustainability must start from an individual level. What is needed at individual level is for them to fully comprehend and internalise values important for sustainability and at each possible action to put them into action. People may have a lot of understanding and awareness of SDGs, but mere knowledge will not lead to any change. Here is where the capacity building programme put strong emphasis on changing the individual before people around him. The bigger the pool of transformed individuals, the faster the transformation. In conclusion, it is hoped that through this process, Tg.Piai and Bentong capacity building programmes will have a domino effect of creating transformation among the whole community members of RCE Greater Gombak.

RCE Recognition Award

2020

Acknowledged Flagship Project

RCE Greater Gombak

Mainstreaming SDGs - Society as Agent of Changes
(Parliamentary-based Capacity Building Project)
This certificate is awarded to RCE Greater Gombak for its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality Education

REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE
ON EDUCATION FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
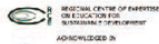
ACKNOWLEDGED IN

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Akio Takemoto
Programme Head, UNU-IAS

3

Living In Fortuitous Era (LIFE)

By Wan Zahidah Wan Zulkifle

Introduction

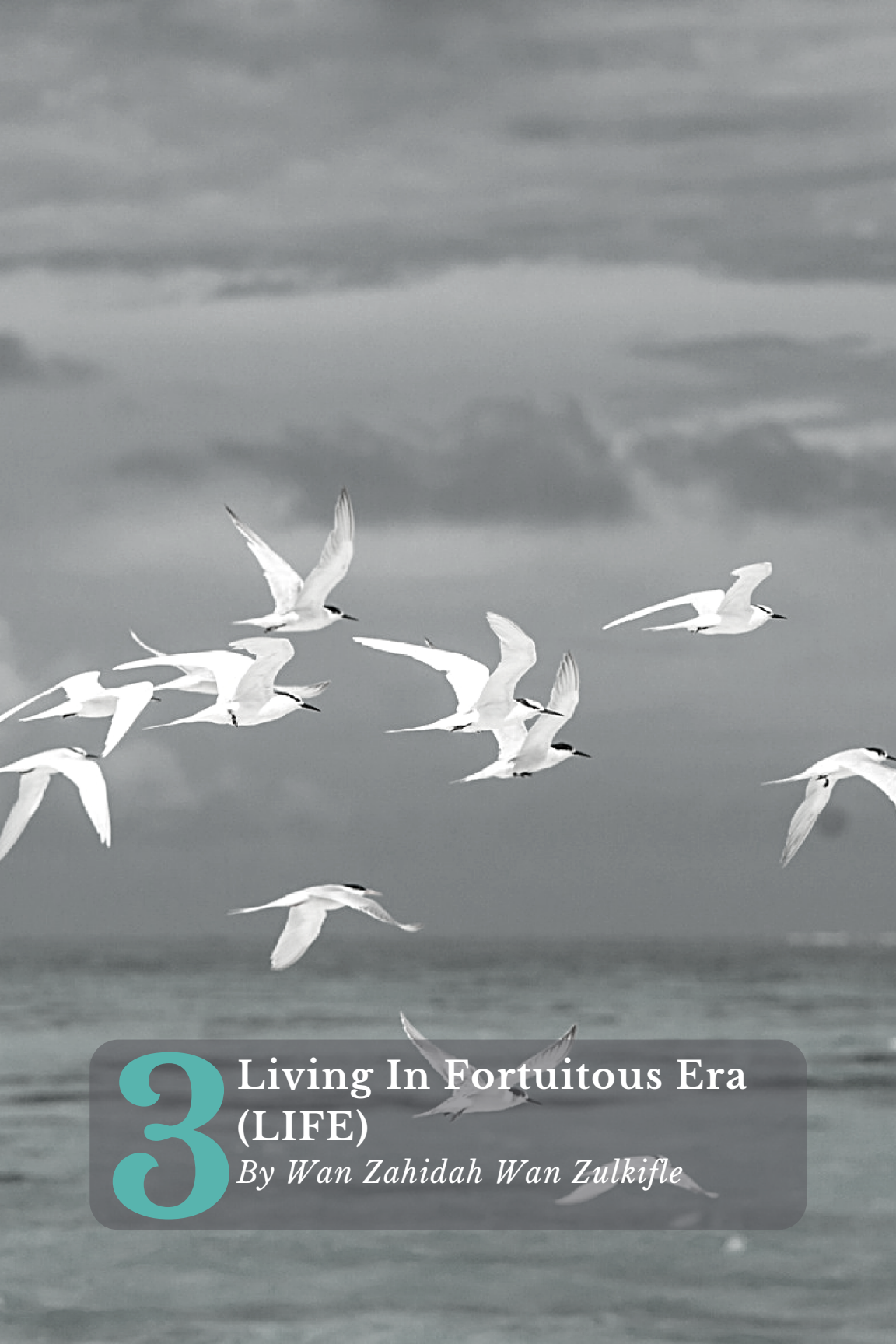2020 started itself off in a rather unorthodox way. Contrary to the popular vision to see flying cars or pilotless drive, the world is now facing a global threat to the most basic thing in our life; health. Malaysia marks its first case of COVID-19 on 25th January 2020 and the cases continue to rise ever since. The World Health Organization (WHO) later announced COVID-19 as pandemic on 11th March 2020 (WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 11 March 2020). Despite the rapid surge of reported cases daily, Malaysia succeeded in flattening the curve and prevented a second wave from happening. However, October 2020 witnessed a third wave of COVID-19 with 24th December 2020 marks the date when Malaysia first hit 100 000 cases (Ministry of Health Malaysia, 2020).

COVID-19 pandemic is not merely a threat to health, but it carries with it disruption to the social, economy, environment and all aspects of life. For a high population density like Klang Valley, the effort to contain the spread of the virus while ensuring the wellbeing of its community in all aspects is undeniably challenging. Klang Valley is an urban conglomeration with Kuala Lumpur as its centre. It is the most populous city in Malaysia with an estimated population of 7.9 million, accounting for 24% of total Malaysia population (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2019). This fast-growing metropolitan region resides not just citizens, but it also serves as home for the majority of non-citizens in Malaysia. With its high density, it serves as the centre for cultural, financial and economic activities in Malaysia. Malaysia's healthcare services and education institutions are also centered in Klang Valley, which offers various expertise and specialisation for the society and growth of the country. RCE Greater Gombak which is hosted by International Islamic University Malaysia is one of the education institutions located within the Klang Valley area.

With the Movement Control Order (MCO) in place, all except essential services activities were put on hold. This had caused various issues ranging from loss of income, anxiety, panic buying, burnout among the frontliners and increased rate of domestic violence. This reaction does not uniquely happen in the case of COVID-19, but it is also commonly reported in any pandemic such as H1N1 before (Goodwin, Haque, Neto & Myers, 2009). Healthcare system also faced challenges in facing the pandemic from both human and equipment resources (Ministry of Health Malaysia, 2020). A highly infectious disease by its very own nature is a disaster, it is even worse when it involves a global scale spread like COVID-19 pandemic.

This disaster had and will continue to expose the community to various socio-economic vulnerabilities. This unprecedented event demands both reactive and proactive measures taking place.

Shortage of medical equipment to attend to COVID-19 cases, inability to put food on the table due to income loss, and disruption of education activities are among issues that need immediate attention. A bigger long-term impact on education, economic and social activities, and ultimately wellbeing, undoubtedly need to be addressed too. Malaysia, currently at its third wave of infection spread, needs more than just reactive measures, but a proper long-term plan as the battle against COVID-19 does not seem to end soon. Therefore, LIFE (Living in Fortuitous Era) is a collection of initiatives which has been initiated by RCE Greater Gombak with International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) as its host in response to the immediate demand of the pandemic, and preventives measures to reduce the socio-economic vulnerabilities risk that will take place if the condition persists for a long time. As this pandemic affects all aspects of life, LIFE was designed to approach the battle holistically and ensure no one is left behind in this testing time.

The 'Life' Project

Fortuitous could be defined literally as something happening by chance and unplanned. This unplanned thing is usually to our favour, thus although not formally defined as lucky chance, it is usually associated with advantageous unprecedented events. This title of the project seems rather weird and unsuitable as COVID-19 pandemic is unlikely to be regarded as a happy occurrence. The author prefers to see things differently. As much as this unprecedented event caused anxiety, panic buying, increased rate of domestic violence and burnout among the frontliners, this pandemic also revealed patience, unity, tolerance, altruism and kindness in Malaysian community, the value that is fully embedded in the concept of Sejahtera. Prof. Emeritus Mohd. Kamal Hassan (2020) defined Sejahtera as "a state of holistic and integrated wellbeing consisting of success, happiness, security and balance in this world and in the hereafter". Sejahtera is a Malay word that carries a positive connotation and is not easily rendered into other languages because of its comprehensive and multi-layered meaning and nuances. However, it is often referred to as wellbeing or prosperity, and the meaning could be summarised by at least ten different elements neatly woven into the acronym SPICES namely spiritual, physio-psychological, intellectual, cognitive, cultural, ethical, emotional, ecological, economic and societal dimensions (Abdul Razak, Khaw, Baharom, Abdul Mutalib & Mohd Salleh, 2018).

LIFE is not a specific project, but rather a collection of initiatives, each with its own objectives which were led by RCE Greater Gombak in the fight against COVID-19. The specific objectives are to help frontliners by supplying Personal Protective Equipments (PPE), providing food assistance for the socially vulnerable group i.e indigenous community and refugees, caring for stray cats, providing better alternatives using technology to manage COVID-19 cases, enabling access to education despite virtual classes challenges and to keep a strong social bond while practicing physical distancing. All of these initiatives emerge at one theme, to uphold humanity in time of trials and ensuring no one is left behind in the battle of this uncertain, indefinite and fortuitous thing called life.

The initiatives in LIFE could be divided broadly into two categories; preventive and restorative. The restorative focus on solving immediate crisis, which includes providing food and essentials for socially vulnerable community i.e refugees, single mothers, and indigenous community; sewing PPEs for the frontliners in healthcare; providing shelter and food for students who could not go back to their home during MCO and caring for stray cats; providing assistance to enable remote teaching and learning and providing platform for psychosocial support. As for preventive measures, IIUM as the host of RCE Greater Gombak promotes 'Physical Distancing with Social Bonding' apart from adopting "C.O.V.I.D practices" namely Cleanliness, ensuring Obedience to all instructions, Vigilance to one's whereabouts, Inclusiveness in translating social bonding into practice and embracing utmost Discipline in breaking the chain of COVID transmission at all time. In addition, a low-cost robot, named Medi-Bot, was developed to assist contactless management of patients especially in cases of high uncertainty of infection. This part of Research and Development also aims to act as a substitute where there is a shortage of personnel at some locations especially in the rural areas. Collectively, these activities are called by the acronym LIFE.

The Impact

At a glance, these initiatives may seem common and practiced all over Malaysia, if not globally. The highlight of LIFE is how various stakeholders, each with their own expertise and passion, contributed to providing solutions in facing challenges caused by COVID-19 and Movement Control Order implementation. It may be as simple as giving food to the stray cats, but even that simple act of kindness is a step towards a better life. As Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said;

"Do not belittle any good deed, even meeting your brother with a cheerful face" (Muslim).

In another Hadith, Ibn 'Umar (May Allah be pleased with them) reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said;

"A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim. So he should not oppress him nor should he hand him over to (his satan or to his self which is inclined to evil). Whoever fulfills the needs of his brother, Allah will fulfill his needs; whoever removes the troubles of his brother, Allah will remove one of his troubles on the Day of Resurrection; and whoever covers up the fault of a Muslim, Allah will cover up his fault on the Day of Resurrection" (The Hadith; Bukhari & Muslim).

All of the initiatives in LIFE ultimately aims to remove hardship and struggles from other human beings and creatures, thus is a translation of the beauty of Islamic teaching.

The output of LIFE project could be summarized as follows;

Restorative:
1. Personal Protective Equipments (PPE) were sewn by students and staff and delivered to the healthcare frontliners in hospital, this includes:
- 3961 coverall jumpsuits
- 3459 isolation gown
- 2707 scarves
- 2429 caps
- 3012 shoe covers

These PPEs were delivered to 20 hospitals and 23 other health facilities in Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah. This number is as of July 2020 and it continues to increase up until now.

2. Food and essentials items packs assistance with the amount of RM 20000 was provided for 500 people from socially vulnerable group which include indigenous people, single mothers and refugees. These assistance packs were delivered to 8 places in Selayang which include low-cost flats, refugees' residences and Indigenous Community Village.

3. RM 45000 funds received to help in providing shelter and food for stray cats

4. 289 e-counselling sessions conducted through various platforms such as Whatsapp, Telegram and Google Meet

5. Around 3000 students, consisting of both local and international students were given free food supplies, access to internet connection and stay during the MCO period

Preventive initiatives:
1. IIUM has formed collaboration with Malaysia National Security Council in creating psychosocial-spiritual infographic for public's education.

2. Development of Medi-Bot which has improved in its version 4.0.

Apart from that, countless articles on COVID-19 have been written by IIUM community and published in local newspapers, sharing sessions on local TV stations and webinars. All of these initiatives act as a mean for public knowledge and education. The psychosocial-spiritual support team has directly helped more than 100 people to survive this crisis while continuing to provide support indirectly through their website. The preventive measures taken have effectively reduced the risk of spread of the virus in IIUM while setting an example for others to follow.

All in all, LIFE has successfully reduced the socioeconomic vulnerabilities risk caused by COVID-19 disaster not just among the IIUM community, but in its regional community; Selayang and Gombak which are part of Klang Valley.

While the tangible output is astounding enough to accentuate the good outcomes of this project, the real impact is far beyond what number could capture. LIFE has left an impact on more than 30000 Klang Valley communities, ranging from the socially vulnerable groups to the frontliners tirelessly working in this fight against COVID-19. In terms of technological advancement, the Medi-bot has facilitated in creating a less risky environment for assessing and treating COVID-19 patients. This provides alternative solutions to the shortage of both healthcare workers and PPEs, and at the same time reduces the risk of exposure for healthcare workers.

Zooming out to a larger scale, the growing number of experts and scientist working together in providing solutions in the effort to manage COVID-19 illustrate that they are now conducting a more specific and directly relevant research and innovation for societal usage. This is going against the idea of university as an ivory tower without true contribution to the community.

Living in Fortuitous Era (LIFE) also successfully mainstreaming the volunteerism culture not only in unprecedented time, but inculcating it as part and parcel of the community. LIFE is represented by various people with various expertise and passion, coming from various backgrounds, but they are willing to work together for the greater good of the community. This is the essence of the Whole Community Transformation agenda led by RCE Greater Gombak.

The projects in their various dimensions and capacities have managed to upskill the partners and stakeholders innovative interest. This is especially apparent in expanding their reach using the skills that they have acquired either individually or collectively.

For example, some of them are now a regular supplier of washable masks to those who are unable to afford or access the items in the open market. This has been synonymous to other similar kinds of activities that have been attempted. It could range from bakery and learning computers as well as IT-related skills. The latter enabled them to organise and network more efficiently, including online marketing and promoting.

Another distinct achievement is the innovation from scientists and experts in IIUM to respond to this pandemic by translating their knowledge into research and creation that actually brings impact in solving problems faced by the society and not merely for journals publication. This is part of humanising education process which has been the strategic direction for IIUM and ultimately contributed to the Whole Community Transformation agenda of RCE Greater Gombak.

All of the initiatives also help in social bonding and solidarity which is important to deter COVID-19. As COVID-19 is non-selective regardless of social status, occupation or age, the only way to win this battle is by uniting and working together. LIFE has brought together many organizations to work together and by working together, they indirectly improve their capacity.

Leveraging Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) for The Project

RCE Greater Gombak was officially acknowledged by the Global RCE Service Centre and Ubuntu Committee on the 1st April 2020. Despite half of the world being in lockdown in the global fight against COVID-19, this recognition news was delivered to IIUM as the host of RCE Greater Gombak. It could not have been at a greater time as this recognition surely serves as a great impetus to truly put the principle of Sustainable Development Goals of 'leaving no one behind' into action. LIFE is a great example of how RCE Greater Gombak responds to the unprecedented event of COVID-19 pandemic. As it encapsulates various initiatives, each initiative is coordinated by various stakeholders. Sejahtera Centre for Sustainability and Humanity, IIUM which is the secretariat of RCE Greater Gombak acts as the focal point to connect and coordinate these initiatives and put them together to ensure a more holistic approach in this long battle against COVID-19.

Being an RCE with its global stature and acknowledgement by UNU, it could garner more partnership from various organisations. This adds to the capacity to reach out to those in real need with better impact as our case demonstrates. Being the first Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) to be recognised during COVID-19, it surely acted as a booster for RCE Greater Gombak to play its role in the course of humanity especially to those in the region. Blessed with a wide range of expertise and niche area of each partner of RCE Greater Gombak, RCE platform is used for better coordination and planning of initiatives.

NGOs and government-related agencies such as Association of Services and Community Development of Gombak District (PSPK) and Yayasan Hasanah focus on food and essentials assistance to the socially vulnerable communities, while technology experts from IIUM focus on Medi-bot to facilitate management of COVID-19 patients. Experts from various expertise in psychological and mental health work together to provide psychological support by having e-counselling sessions and at the same time, working together with comic and art experts to produce psychosocial-spiritual content for the public. All of these examples illustrate how each of the players have their role to play in this battle and RCE acts as the uniting platform to connect these players so a bigger impact could be achieved.

'Life' as a Translation of IIUM Agenda into Practice

International Islamic University Malaysia has set its strategic direction for 2019-2020 to humanising education through Sustainable Development Goals and Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah. Although this direction was set in 2019, the efforts towards sustainable development has been part and parcel of the university way before its official announcement. This could be clearly demonstrated in their mission statement No. 2 which stated that:

> *"To produce better quality intellectuals, professionals and scholars by integrating the qualities of faith (imān), knowledge (ʿilm), and good character (akhlāq) to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in the Muslim world."*

This mission statement is considered visionary as it was gazetted in 1995 and its impact was slowly built up until today, where it is finally recognized as Sustainability Institution of The Year 2020 by Green Gown Award Committee. LIFE is among the various initiatives taken towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals mainly SDG 3, Good Health and Wellbeing, SDG 1, No Poverty, SDG 2, Zero Hunger and SDG 17, Partnership for the Goals. As for the RCE Award, it is also listed as a project under Disaster Risk Reduction Theme as the main concern is COVID-19 pandemic which is undeniably a type of biological disaster (Keung Chan, 2020).

Ensuring health and wellbeing, as well as promoting unity among various types of people coming from different backgrounds to work together is not only in line with the principles in Sustainable Development, but is also part of Islamic teachings. Hifz Al-nafs or protection of life or self is the second most crucial Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah or Purpose of Islamic jurisprudence, followed by Hifz Al-'Aql which is Protection of Intellect (Moten, 2020). The initiatives listed in LIFE ultimately aim to protect the wellbeing of each individual-self including physical, mental and social wellbeing.

The beauty of Islam could also be clearly seen in the spirit of working together between various stakeholders involved. This could be illustrated in the Quranic verse which stated that;

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إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ۚ

</div>

"The believers are nothing else than brothers (in Islam). So make reconciliation between your brothers, and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy" (49 : 10)

The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) also reminded the believers on the importance of unity and that no one is superior over the other in His last sermon;

> *"... Arabs have no superiority over non-Arabs and Non-Arabs have no Superiority over Arabs, You are all equal except by piety and good actions. I leave behind me two things, the Quran and my example, the Sunnah and if you follow these you will never go astray" (The Hadith, Al-Bukhari, Hadith 1623, 1626, 6361)*

Islam also takes cognizance in working together and standing together as a team as highlighted in the hadith below;

> *"Bashir reported Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him) as saying: The similitude of believers in regard to mutual love, affection, fellow-feeling is that of one body; when any limb of it aches, the whole body aches, because of sleeplessness and fever." (The Hadith, n.d.)*

Individually, each initiative in LIFE may seem to be a small act of kindness of particular parties. With good faith, it will help alleviate the burden faced because of the pandemic, but collectively it is a wonderful showcase of how Islamic principles and Sustainable Development Agenda is translated into beautiful actions on the ground. This is the gist of humanising education in the context of IIUM.

Conclusion

The coronavirus pandemic is a global phenomenon encompassing various cultures and lifestyles. Globally, it has infected more than 47 million as of the end of October with a 3% fatality rate and the numbers do not seem to stop rising any sooner. This virus has caused various economic, social and environmental impacts on a global scale, which is pernicious in one aspect but it also opens up opportunities for the world to unite and learn from each other. There is a lot of learning experience to be gained especially between the Global North and South where disparities are prominent. Under the scenario of social solidarity sans a cultural and geographical barriers global linkages can further enhance solidarity in the flattening the Covid-19 curve. It has worked well locally, it should so too regionally and globally with RCE being the focal point.

Recognition of RCE Greater Gombak during the time where half of the world is put on 'lockdown' is timely as this provides us with the opportunity to truly showcase the long-lost value of humanity and social bonding despite having to practice physical distancing. In the process of co-learning, various collaborations are being made and this networking further strengthens the motivation to win this battle. The local expression of #kitajagakita which literally means 'We Take Care of Each Other' is the best way to summarize how RCE Greater Gombak approaches the disaster risk reduction for COVID-19 as illustrated in the Living in Fortuitous Era (LIFE) Project.

RCE Recognition Award
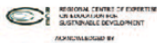
2020

Acknowledged Flagship Project

RCE Greater Gombak

Living in Fortuitous Era (LIFE)
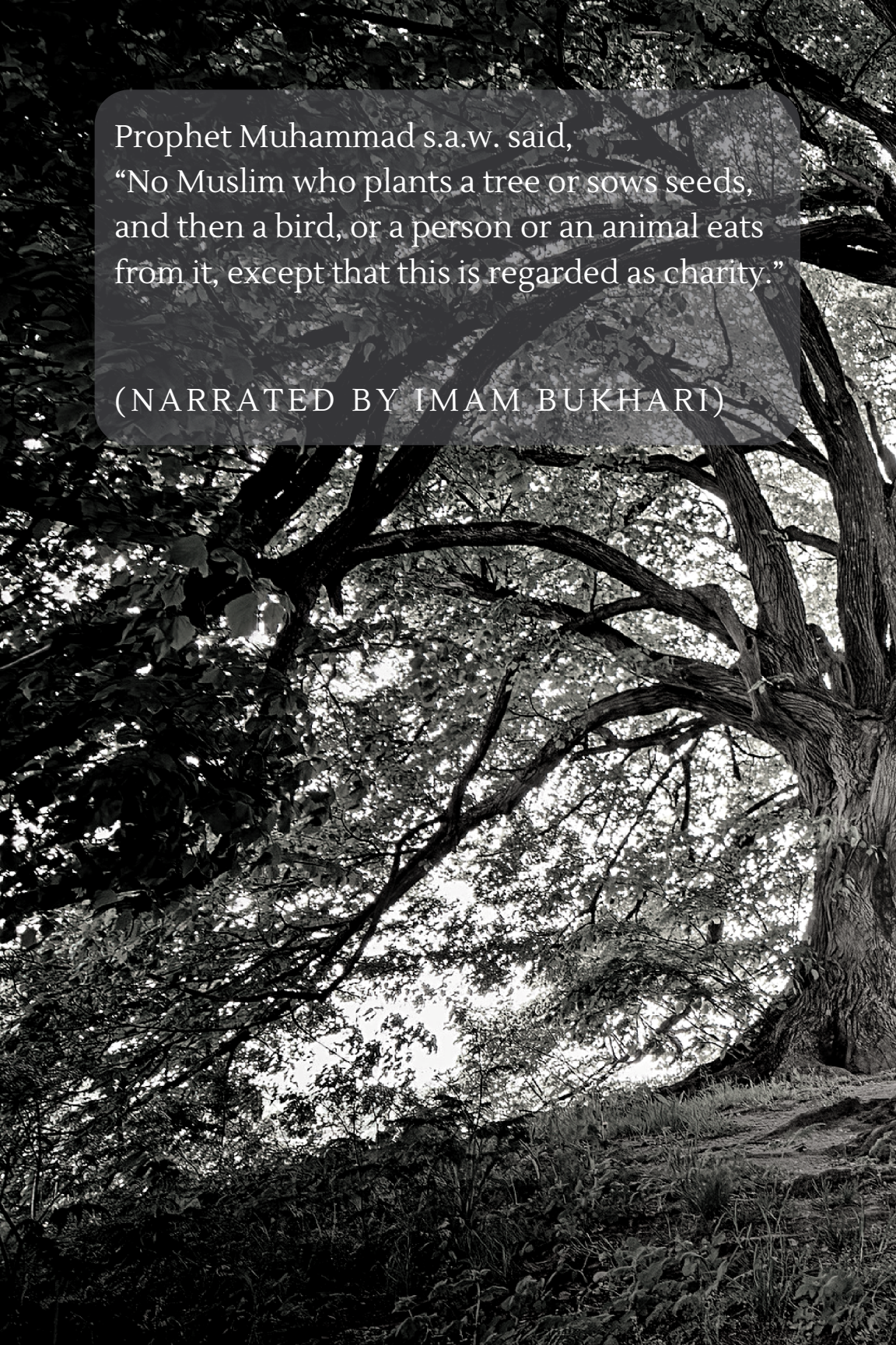
This certificate is awarded to RCE Greater Gombak for its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being

REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE
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ACKNOWLEDGED BY

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Akio Takemoto
Programme Head, UNU-IAS

Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. said,
"No Muslim who plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person or an animal eats from it, except that this is regarded as charity."

(NARRATED BY IMAM BUKHARI)

Section 3: Spirituality and Sustainability

4
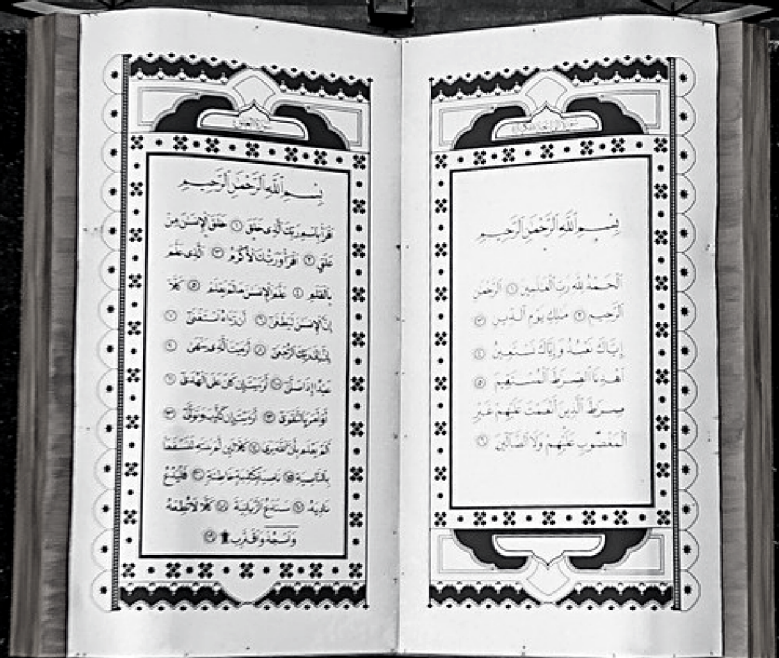
#2LEAD4PEACE
Capacity Building for Islam, Peace and Civilisational Development:
Engaging Extremism, Terrorism and Conflict through Education for Sustainability (2019-2020)

By Danial Yusof & Dzulkifli Abdul Razak

Introduction: Partnership for Peace

In 2019, IIUM launched a series of flagship projects, intended to achieve outcomes and impact based on the shared platform of Islamisation, Sustainable Devel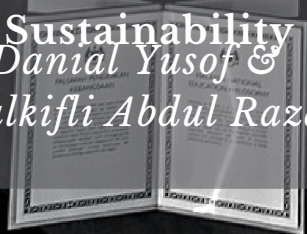opment Goals and Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah. The Peacebuilding and Civilisational Development Flagship Project of IIUM, otherwise known in short as 2LEAD4PEACE, evolved from a research that looked into the PCVE (Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism) scenario in Malaysia, in terms of capacity building for education, training, research and stakeholder engagement.

In a seminar organised by the 2LEAD4PEACE project in 2019 and officiated by the Minister of Home Affairs, it was disclosed that there had been 518 arrests in relation to VE (Violent Extremism) and terrorism by PDRM (Royal Malaysian Police) out of which 175 were found guilty. 82% of those arrested were those aged below 40 years old. Furthermore, 266 social media accounts also had to be shut down in relation to the same concerns. From these numbers, it is evident that PCVE programmes needed to be incorporated into education for sustainability - targeted specifically at the youth and other vulnerable groups and also more general initiatives for individual and community resilience, civic development, peace and nation building programmes. Despite the position of Malaysia as a safe haven compared to a few other states in the region and the end of the physical territories of ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) in 2019, it was also evident that their ideology remains latent, especially in the digital realm. In addition, the rise of FRE (Far Right Extremism) and Islamophobia, the emergence of a Cold War 2.0 with the rise of China adds to the discourse of "The Clash of Civilisations" that has to be addressed in relation to SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. In the launching of the 1st ICVE 2021 (International Symposium on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in Malaysia and Southeast Asia), also organised by 2LEAD4PEACE and START-University of Maryland (National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism), it was also disclosed by PDRM's E8 (Counter-terrorism Division) head, Normah Ishak, that there had only been 7 arrests in relation to VE and Terrorism in 2020, down from 72 in 2019, and that COVID-19 has "flattened the curve of terrorism", at least in Malaysia (Chew, 2020). Having said this, it was also agreed at the symposium launching on the latency of VE and the evolution of the various factors in relation to its activation in individuals and society that requires a public health model of programming and intervention.

At the point of inception in 2018, the project was centred on locally based researchers, practitioners and consultants from ISTAC-IIUM, USM (Universiti Sains Malaysia), Mercy Malaysia and UMS (Universiti Malaysia Sabah). It gradually expanded in its focus on capacity building for PCVE, beginning with collaborative research and activities with START-University of Maryland in 2019. In relation to the flagship, a new research unit – the EARU (Extremism Analytical Research Unit), was also established. 3 student-scholar affiliates of the unit completed a 6 weeks training stint at START on profiling, geo-spatial and simulation knowledge and instruments in the same year. Furthermore, collaborative research grants on a study on migration and violent extremism in Sabah, effective PCVE narratives for Malaysian youth and Malaysian use of social media were also acquired in 2020 and will be completed in 2021 due to delays caused by the pandemic.

Apart from research, 2LEAD4PEACE was also extensively involved in peace education and engagement activities from 2019 to the present with Malaysian society and youth, working with the likes of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Youth and Sports, and ACCIN (Allied Coordinating Committee of Islamic NGOs). These activities would also involve expertise and involvement, for example, from the PDRM, SEARCCT-MOFA (Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and many other public agencies, civil society groups, researchers, and academics.

Global, Regional and National Policies

The overarching global policies for this project are:
- SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
- 2015 UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism

There is a common understanding that the alignment of these two agendas is important. This has cascaded down to regional and national areas of policy making and implementation. At the national level, the strategy paper for ensuring a safe, secure and peaceful nation for the upcoming 12th Malaysia Plan is also expected to focus on countering extremism and terrorism. As mentioned earlier, this will be followed up by the creation of the NAP for PCVE 2021-2025 this year. Relevant to this is also the emphasis of Malaysia's FPK (National Philosophy of Education) as a foundational discourse of peace and justice for nation building and global citizenship.

Malaysia also has a policy of regional and international cooperation when it comes to strategising on counter-terrorism and deradicalisation. The project also leverages on part of the existing regional ecosystem and aims to facilitate capacity building at the local and regional level outlined and discussed in various regional forums for security matters such as The ASEAN Plus Three Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC + 3); SOMTC + 3 Working Group on Narcotics; and Border Management Working Group (BMWG). Internationally, Malaysia is currently State Party to 9 of the 13 international conventions and protocols on combating terrorism (including the threat of nuclear terrorism). Most recently, Malaysia became the 46th nation to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on October 30th, 2020 (ICAN, n.d.).

Achievements, Impacts, and Challenges

IIUM was earlier declared as the Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) on Education for Sustainable Development in April 2020. RCE is a network of cooperation between individuals, communities, experts and organisations committed to building a sustainable future through education. The Global RCE Network portal in December 2020 announced awards for innovative projects on education for sustainable development that serve as a link among the local community. 2LEAD4PEACE was announced as one of the 8 project winners for IIUM. 2LEAD4PEACE had also earlier received the award for the overall Flagship winner in the 2020 IIUM Takrim or Quality day. While such acknowledgements are appreciated and morale boosting, they are more important to help 2LEAD4PEACE serve with an impetus for future contributions to nation building and peace. In this regard, 2LEAD4PEACE will see a couple exciting core involvements in the horizon in 2021. Firstly, 2LEAD4PEACE will facilitate a web portal for PCVE, nation building and peace education. This effort will be jointly developed with MPI (Malaysia Press Institute), USM and SEARCCT. Secondly, we will be involved in the development of NAP (National Action Plan) for PCVE 2021-2025 as consultants to IPSOM-MOHA (Institute of Public Security of Malaysia, Ministry of Home Affairs), and UiTM (Universiti Teknologi MARA). A more exhaustive list of collaborators may be found in figure 1 below:

START-University of Maryland, MSI A Tetra Tech Company, SEAN-CSO

USM, UiTM, UMS, UMT, ACCIN, Soka Gakai, IPSOM, SEARCCT, MPI, MOHA, KBS
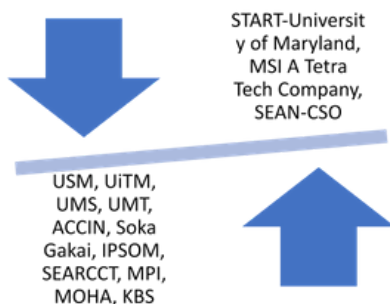
Figure 1: National and International Collaborators of the Project

Stakeholders of the project include academia, specifically those involved in the field of PCVE and CT (counter-terrorism), peace and conflict studies, policymakers and practitioners in the PCVE and CT sector, those in the field of international relations and relevant ministries e.g. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Higher Education etc., CSOs, Malaysian youth as those at risk; Malaysian students in higher learning institutions and the general public.

Apart from creating awareness and understanding of what "peace" and "justice" is all about in the context of SDG 16, the project has managed to create a cohesive collaborative platform for capacity building and educational content for the stakeholders involved in PCVE, CT and Peace Studies. The project also aspires to get the banning of nuclear weapons as a mark of success in dispensing "peace" and "justice" universally. To this effect, Malaysia which was mentioned earlier as having ratified the landmark Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) on the 30th September 2020 led to other four countries to do likewise with Honduras being the 50th indicating that the treaty will go into full force on the 22nd January 2021.

Engagement about values like "peace" and "justice" cannot be taught in classrooms, but is to be "caught" experientially as mentioned above. This proves challenging since such opportunities are rare if not for the approaches advocated by Education for Sustainable Development. It is further enhanced by the sometimes "intangible" targets of the 5Ps of People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships. Further lessons learned are the method of assessment away from the tangibles (numbers, percentages) or the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). To this effect, the project is able to produce another method based on the concept of Key Intangible Performance (KIP). It is more values-based and relevant to the outcome of the project, which at its core, is more reflective of global citizenship and nation-building and just as important to policymaking and security.

The Virtuous Engaging Islam, Peace, and Civilization Development with Extremism, Terrorism, and Conflict through Education for Sustainability

Bridging Silos

By not working in silos and emphasising on partnerships for the goal, 2LEAD4PEACE was able to add national and international researchers, consultants, practitioners and funders to the cause. In Figure 2 below, a virtuous circle was formed, benefitting various PCVE stakeholders in an expanding project for a partnership-oriented governance of peace and security.
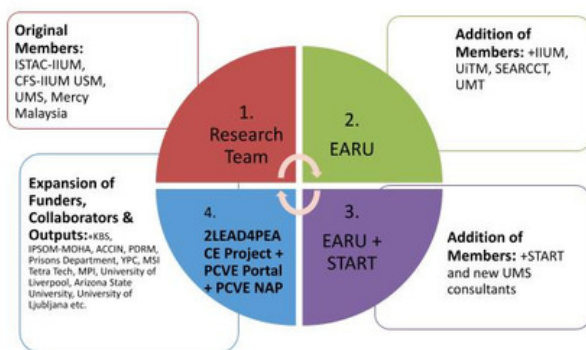

Figure 2: The Virtuous Circle of Networking and Collaboration

The activities will culminate in the creation of a series of modules or courses by the EARU (that can be utilised for various educational tools for sustainable development purposes i.e modules and certificate courses to MA level programmes in PCVE, CT and Peace Studies suitable for policymakers, practitioners, researchers and activists in these fields. The materials can also be used for informative and educational engagement with stakeholders for capacity building. A web portal dedicated to PCVE, CT and Peace is also being set up collaboratively by IIUM, USM, SEARCCT and MPI to facilitate education, training and sharing of best practices amongst journalists, researchers, activists and practitioners in these fields. A consortium and editorial board from the portal's founding members will likely be set up in 2021 for the purposes of new research, content creation, and funding for the sustainability of the portal encompassing issues such as COVID-19 and security, decoloniality and the terrorism industry, and the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Activities, Participation, Outputs, and Outcomes

In support of the relevant policies mentioned earlier, the outputs (1-4) and outcomes (5-6) of the activities are:

1. To produce content on PCVE, CT, and Peace Studies to be used for various stakeholder engagement, public advocacy and education, training and capacity building activities as standalone modules, certificate and Masters level programme.

2. To develop a national PVCE, CT, and Peace Studies programme package for the Malaysian youth based on the public health model in collaboration with relevant ministries, agencies, CSOs, and other stakeholders that emphasises on nation-building, global citizenship and peace-building.

3. To ensure sustainability of the networks and collaborative capacity via a national level PCVE and Peace web portal.

4. To provide consultancy to the development of Malaysia's PCVE NAP.

5. To bring attention and provide input to contemporary issues and Malaysia's involvement in peacebuilding dialogue, mediation, and advocacy.

6. To contribute to a new discourse on Malaysian nation-building and global citizenship.

Kick-Off Meeting: Capacity Building on Countering
Violent Extremism in Malaysia and Southeast Asia
(4-6 December 2018)

The range of participation was from double figures to a few hundred and even a thousand, depending on the activities and duration. The basic details on our advocacy and awareness programmes involved the following:

- Exhibition (over a month) are held at various public places; and seminars (in person) and webinars in conjunction of the global events anniversary of the Atomic Bomb explosion in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, on August 6th and 9th respectively
- Launching of a book entitled: The Ashes of Hiroshima translated from the Malay version (Debu-debu Hiroshima). The book narrates the experience of a Malaysian sole A-Bomb survivor.
- Talks by invited guests and political leaders on the subject of "peace" and "justice" encompassing issues such as Islamophobia and religion for the prevention of violent extremism etc.
- Community engagement programmes including cultural and recreational in nature that involved students in particular e.g. national and zonal youth conventions on empowerment and PCVE and CT.

Islam for Nation Building and Global Citizenship

The project gained significance like the proverbial snowball through empowerment from strategic collaborations. From the humble beginning of a research group, it expanded to include national and international partners. Likewise, the forging of peace can only be done when we as a community build bridges across people and organizations from various divides. In relation to this, IIUM's Roadmap 2.0 (2019-2020) has been foundational to the realisation of the project as a flagship of the university. It provided the building blocks for visioning the integration of previously disconnected values, principles, philosophy and goals (IIUM, n.d.). This project was established by connecting:

- IIUM's IIICE elements of civilisational aspirations (Internationalisation), breaking down barriers and transdisciplinarity (Integration), Sejahtera and Islamisation in Action (Islamisation), and engagement (Comprehensive Excellence),
- The 5Ps related to SDG 4 (Quality Education), 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).
- UNESCO's (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) educational pillar of learning to live together,
- FPK's (Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan) wisdom in the harmony and prosperity of family, society and nation,

- Maqāṣid al-sharīʻah's 5 necessities of human existence, and
- PCVE public health model or all of society approach for resilience (See Figure 3).

In addition to SDG 16 as an overarching global policy for the project, it is also as mentioned above, connected SDG 4 and 17. In relation to SDG 4, 2LEAD4PEACE through the development of its PCVE modules for education, engagement and training aims to also formally promote quality education for sustainable development via the promotion of a culture of peace, non-violence, diversity and global citizenship in its curriculum content for certificate, Masters degree and stakeholder engagement workshops. At the same time, all of society or public health model approach for social empowerment and resilience also makes SDG 17 highly relevant. The 2LEAD4PEACE project highly emphasises on capacity building and multi-stakeholder partnerships as evident in its approach to research and engagement activities. It also advocated for the creation of the PCVE NAP for Malaysia as a necessary plan to meet SDG 16 by ensuring public, private and civil society synergy for the security and public safety pillar of Malaysia's development plan. In the invitation to join the research project for the PCVE NAP for Malaysia 2021-2025, one of the documents that was referred to for the push for the NAP was the 2LEAD4PEACE International Seminar Resolution Document on Religious Values in PCVE (2019) co-organised by ACCIN and various civil society organisations.

At the heart of the matter of this project is the centrality of Islam in contributing to Malaysia's nation-building and global citizenship. In the context of PCVE, it means to infuse Islamic leadership, content and values into the universal or specific relevant preventive programming and intervention measures of the public health model for Malaysia's social and societal resilience. This makes the project connected to 3 of IIUM's mission statements, specifically, "to produce better quality intellectuals, professionals and scholars by integrating the qualities of faith (iman), knowledge (ʻilm) and good character (akhlaq) to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in the Muslim world"; "to enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilisation dialogues in Malaysia as well as across communities and nations" and also, "to develop an environment that instills commitment for life-long learning and a deep sense of social responsibility".
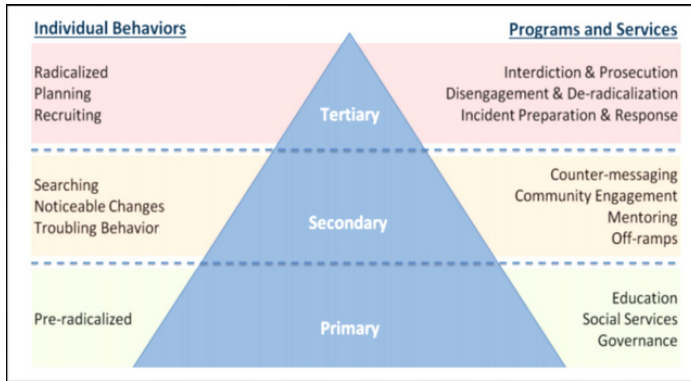
Figure 3: The Public Health Model for PCVE (Challgren et al. 2016)

Conclusion

IIUM's acknowledged RCE G2 (Regional Centre of Expertise, Greater Gombak) on Education for Sustainable Development provides important short-term and long-term mission statements and goals that help to facilitate 2LEAD4PEACE's quadruple helix model of partnerships (IIUM n.d.). In the short-term, in 2019-2020, 2LEAD4PEACE:

- Empowered targeted vulnerable communities such as the youth to address the threat of VE in 2019-2020 in the area and beyond.
- Aims to establish baseline data, for example, of the Malaysia youth profile in Selangor in relation to VE risk and social media usage through research that started in 2020 but is now expected to be concluded in 2021,
- Worked with multiple stakeholders in the area and beyond on various PCVE activities in 2019-2020.

In the long-term, 2LEAD4PEACE:
- Aims to establish building blocks to a resilient and harmonious local community and the extended Malaysia society through PCVE incorporated approaches to nation building and security as is being planned and by being a part of the consultancy team in the NAP development for 2021-2025.
- Develop content for long-term PCVE and nation-building efforts via education, engagement, training, funding and research based on the consortium model expected to be used for the multi-stakeholder PCVE portal expected to be launched in 2021.

RCE Recognition Award

2020

Honourable Mention

RCE Greater Gombak

Capacity Building for Islam, Peace and Civilizational Development: Engaging Extremism, Terrorism and Conflict through Education for Sustainability (2019 – 2020): #2Lead4Peace

This certificate is awarded to RCE Greater Gombak for its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY

Akio Takemoto
Programme Head, UNU-IAS

5

Closing the Loop: A Campus-Wide Waste Minimisation Initiative Through Education for Sustainable Development

By Irina Safitri Zen

Introduction

The main campus of IIUM in Gombak, Kuala Lumpur, is located in a valley of the district of Gombak, a suburb of the capital city. The 2,832,799.5 sqm or 700 acres (2.8 km²) campus houses 30,700 students, academics and administrators altogether. From that size, about 1,002,700.00 sqm or 35 % is forest vegetation. Hence, it has an important ecosystem which functions as a carbon sequestration mechanism to mitigate global warming effects. The campus provides complete education building, infrastructures and facilities, student's dormitory and residential houses. Approximately 3,246,478 kg of total solid waste generated from the campus population in the year 2019. This is equal to 0.290 kg per person per day compared to the national average of 0.5 to 0.18 kg per person per day for the same year. However, this amount manifested in high amount of carbon emitted which recorded about 3.8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO2e) of landfill methane produced from waste generated on campus.

Waste Composting Programme

The food waste composting programme is started as a Go Green Initiative to reduce food waste generation and produce compost as a value-added product. Hence, it demonstrates the full loop of circular economy in the context of food waste to compost (Figure 1). The sustainability of governance is shown through the involvement of various internal stakeholders for IIUM Campus Sustainability Initiatives. This partnership enhances students and researchers' involvement on the full loop of the circular economy food waste framework (Figure 1).

The overall composition of IIUM municipal waste consists of 55 % recyclable items and 45 % food waste. Meanwhile, from the 1,460,915 kg of food waste generated at IIUM in 2009, only about 0.2 % or 64,929 kg of food waste were used for composting.

On the contrary, it shows the untapped potential of food waste for composting. It is a challenge to educate the campus community to separate their food waste from the general waste in café. Other types of waste are still found in food waste before entering the composting process. The composting capacity is mainly focused for Cafeteria and restaurants in the Central area. Future planning for smart composting bins for the cafeteria at Mahallah are being planned.

Meanwhile, mobile and fixed food waste separation facilities are commonly found in every canteen and cafe. On top of the numbers described, the message from this initiative is that it requires a campus community-wide involvement to ensure the success of IIUM aspiration towards Zero Waste Campus. It needs a change in how we govern our waste and a change in the behaviour of IIUM campus community towards sustainable consumption. Therefore, this initiative demonstrates the promotion of education for sustainable development, ESD approach in providing various forms of education.

Figure 1: IIUM Circular Economy of Food Waste

The overall activity of the circularity of food waste or 'From Fork to Farm' initiative is located in IIUM Gombak and Kuantan campus. The initiative covers several strategies and structures of activities which involves all communities; the academia who are the researcher and lecturers, the administrative staff, and the students as the biggest group community. Throughout their varsity years, students will be experiencing sustainable community practices which would later turn them into agents of change in society. The initiative is possible by providing the right or conducive environment for campus community to change their behaviour by separating food waste from the source.

Educational Awareness and Campaign for Zero Single-Use of Plastic

There are several facilities provided to accommodate Zero Waste initiative at IIUM:

- The IIUM Recycling & Buy-back Centre
- Food waste separation facility at 50 cafés, canteen and restaurants inside the campus
- Food waste composting centre by the campus waste operator, IIUM Daya Bersih Sdn. Bhd.

IIUM Recycling & Buy-back Centre

Food waste composting centre

To administer the whole process, the IIUM food waste composting research group led by the Kulliyyah of Engineering developed the IIUM waste minimisation guideline. Students from various clubs and societies had led the IIUM Zero Single-Use Plastic Campaign and food waste separation programmes. Selected courses and research related to food waste conducted as part of the student and researcher's research activity to contribute to campus sustainability living lab initiative. The waste minimisation initiative provides a venue for students to learn real-world issues related to sustainable development in their campus daily life. The use of compost for own consumption such as for community edible garden and landscaping may reduce fertiliser procurement and improve soil quality and performance."

Involvement of Various Stakeholders Towards Sustainable Development

As a part of the Go Green Initiative, food waste composting begins in 2015 under the Office of the Executive Director, Development and Planning (Figure 3). It is part of IIUM's sustainable campus vision and mission. The vision stated that "We enVISION IIUM Campuses to be sustainable and Conducive for a Learning and Innovative Community based on Sustainable Development Goals" and the Mission stated 'To provide a sustainable campus environment which is livable, safe, environment-friendly and effectively functional'.
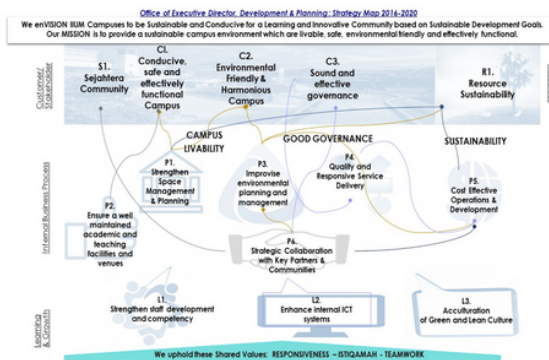

Figure 2: IIUM Office of the Executive Director, Development and Planning, 2015-2020

The IIUM Go Green Initiative was championed by IIUM Go Green Committee, which are represented by researchers from Kulliyyah of Engineering, Kulliyyah of Science, Kulliyyah of Architecture and Environmental, Kulliyyah of Allied Health Sciences, and the staff members Executive Director Development and Planning, including Development Division (DD), Occupational, Safety, Health And Built Environment (OSHBE) Department, Sejahtera Centre for Sustainability and Humanity (SC4SH) and Residential Service Department (RSD). It is also supported by the service provider Daya Bersih Sdn. Bhd showcasing the trans-disciplinary approach of sustainability. Moreover, students' involvement in the educational campaign on Zero Single-Use Plastic is another effort to support Zero Waste Campus Initiative. One of the University's core subjects is on waste management and students are able to practise the inputs from that subject onto real-world problems through class projects inside the campus. The introduction of Sustainable Development: Issues, Principles and Practices (UNGS 1201) conducted by Sejahtera Centre for Sustainability and Humanity (SC4SH) functions to give awareness to the campus sustainability community wellbeing.

At the same time, the Centre functions as a connector for the internal stakeholder to accelerate this initiative by being part of the University's transformational process. This is part of its function as a secretariat for Regional Centres of Expertise, RCE on Education for Sustainable Development, ESD.

The contributing and complementary action towards sustainability governance can clearly be visualised in various parts of the university. There are 85 lecturers involved in the University's core subject, UNGS 1201: Sustainable Development: Issues, Principle & Practices, which is an introductory course to Sustainable Development. Approximately 1000 academic and administrative staff participated in the workshop of Insan Sejahtera and Taa'ruf Intellectual Discourse, TIDE programme where there is a section on the introduction of ESD, sustainable development goals, SDGs and IIUM campus sustainability initiative.

The course shared about SDGs as well as inter- and transdisciplinary approaches of a campus sustainability initiative, i.e food waste composting initiative. Apart from that, students are actively participating in the effort through EcoClub student organisation which consists of members from various faculties or Kulliyyahs. They are also involved in the Zero Single-Use Plastic campaign as part of sustainable lifestyle. Members of the GoGreen Committee have regular meetings for the improvement of the programme.
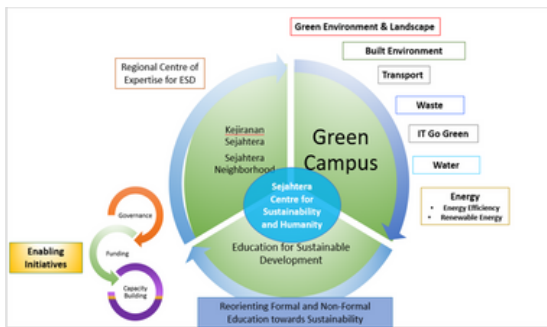

Figure 3: Three Main Functions of IIUM Sejahtera Centre for Sustainability & Humanity

Achievement and Showcase of IIUM Agenda

The main objective for IIUM circularity of food waste is to reduce food waste production and generate valuable products from waste to protect our environment. The successes of this initiative are beyond what the data could record. The food waste reduction recorded above reflects the effort behind the food waste separation at source by the campus community and the process of compost production. Further, 97% or MYR 41,500.00 or USD 10,001.21 saving from pesticide procured reflects a portion for our landscaping.

In the context of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah, the IIUM circularity of food waste signifies good life (Hayāt al-tayyibah), being moderate (wasāt) through responsible consumption and encourages harmony with nature and avoiding resource exploitation and wastage.

Allah SWT said in the Holy Quran,

<div dir="rtl">

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِى الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِى النَّاسِ لِيُذِيْقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِيْ عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ

</div>

"Corruption has spread on land and sea as a result of what people's hands have done, so that Allah may cause them to taste ˹the consequences of˺ some of their deeds and perhaps they might return ˹to the Right Path.˺" (30 : 41)

Avoiding wastefulness is also expressed in the Holy Quran,

<div dir="rtl">

وَلَا تُسْرِفُوْا ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ

</div>

"But waste not by excess, for Allah loveth not the wasters"
(6 : 141)

Allah SWT said in the Holy Quran,

<div dir="rtl">

وَّكُلُوْا وَاشْرَبُوْا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوْا ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ ۙ

</div>

"Eat and drink, but waste not by excess, verily He loves not the excessive" (7 : 31). The circularity of food waste promotes good practices, reduces the use of pesticides, and uses its own composting which helps in regenerating the soil and improving our environmental quality. Conservation of the environment principles and human beings are warned not to misuse or damage the natural resources (Quran 7:31, Quran 6: 141). The campaigns for zero waste plastic and food waste separation align with these Ayat. Overall, to ensure ecological sustainability, it is vital for everyone to ensure that our activity does not jeopardize the environment.

However, the main objective of this initiative is not only focused on reducing waste generation. The development of human capacity has contributed to the effort of transforming IIUM. Many of the campus sustainability initiatives have the potential to educate the community to practice sustainable living and ecosystem. These initiatives provide a platform for IIUM community to experience how to live sustainably in the context of sustainable living and ecosystem. Providing the right facilities helps to create a conducive environment for behavioural changes coupled with continuous awareness talk related to this activity through various ESD programmes and activities to the campus community. This is either through food waste separation in café or restaurants inside campus or source separation for recycling and community gardening.

Sustainability governance demonstrates how we govern our food waste from waste separation, composting process, landscaping and gardening. There is a connection between campus operation and action research where the researcher transfers the knowledge to the practitioner and where the practitioner shares tacit knowledge in handling the composting to improve the compost quality and for the overall campus operation performance. This is how we achieve sustainable living status. In the context of ESD, we promote the experiential and transformative learning for the campus operator to be part of the University agenda, 'Humanising Education'. The initiative promotes five components of 21st century of learning, i.e.: Learning To Know (the development of skills and knowledge needed to function in this world e.g. formal acquisition of literacy, numeracy, critical thinking and general knowledge), Learning To Do (the acquisition of applied skills linked to professional success.), Learning To Live Together (the development of social skills and values such as respect and concern for others and the appreciation of cultural diversity), Learning To Be (the learning that contributes to a person's mind, body, and spirit.

Skills include creativity and personal discovery acquired through reading, the Internet and activities such as sports and arts), and Learning To Become (when individuals and groups gain knowledge, develop skills, and acquire new values as a result of learning, they are equipped with tools and mindsets for creating lasting change in organizations, communities and societies). This is where the community involved in this initiative can change themselves and others in the community.

Whole Community Transformation of RCE Greater Gombak

The main agenda for the whole community transformation of RCE Greater Gombak depends on the active participation of the community through various approaches of ESD. This should include not only the University, but also the involvement of RCE Partners or stakeholders in the region. The vertical implementation of ESD involves higher education institutions, schools and the lateral collaboration of knowledge sharing with the local government, local community and private entities. Here it is referred to as the quadruple helix in the form of collaboration. This initiative contributes to strengthening the internal capacity of IIUM as the secretariat of RCE Greater Gombak by implementing the RCE vision and mission. Functioning as a demonstration site, IIUM showcases how a sustainable society looks like, through the circularity of food waste. The process involves food waste separation, food waste composting, landscaping and community gardening. It showcases active participation from this initiative as part of IIUM community co-learning experiences. Hence, it is part of adult social learning that brings into the transformation of the University.

Having campus sustainability with its food waste composting provides a platform for the researcher to conduct their research and apply it for landscaping purposes or 'Testbed'. Students learn about the composting technique and IIUM campus community indirectly contribute to the close loop of IIUM food waste composting and production. This action gives an example of how applied research and scientific knowledge accelerate and improve campus operation. Tacit knowledge by technical staff involved in IIUM Food Waste Composting Centre supports the overall process. Executing this initiative to support the whole university's transformational approach.

Through the implementation of the circularity of food waste, the IIUM community contributes to Goal 1 'To build a society that is socially resilient, culturally sustainable, environmentally friendly and economically viable'. One proverb describes, 'One cannot teach others while they do not practice what they preach' or a person must be capable to apply their teachings before teaching other people. Second Goal, by demonstrating the circularity of food waste as an issue with the inter- and transdisciplinary approach, IIUM showcases how 'To establish the Real-world Lab platform which addresses cross-cutting issues, i.e. social, environment and economy by implementing transdisciplinary approach'. Overall, the project contributes to short term mission number one and three of RCE GG.
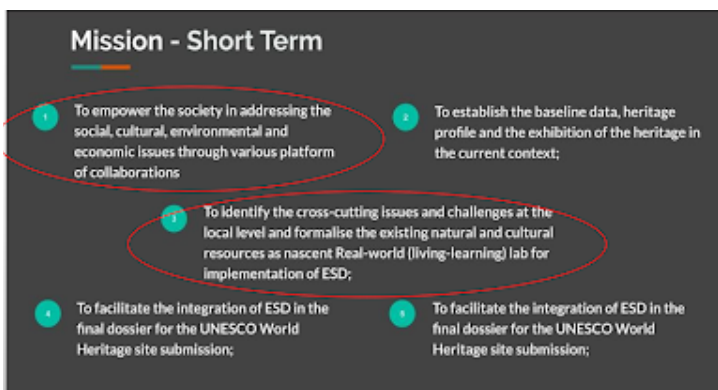
Figure 4: RCE Greater Gombak – Short Term Mission

From the perspective of transformational organisational process, this is a process of building up the internal capacity of sustainable community which has the potential for the community of practices, CoP of IIUM Campus Sustainability. This creates a pathway of how the non-formal approach of ESD takes place in the transformational process. However, more effort is needed to develop CoP in a more integrated approach.

The University's core subject, UNGS 1201 'Sustainable Development: Issues, Principle & Practice' creates another platform for students to get involved in campus sustainability initiatives. This includes the circularity of food waste as a formal approach of ESD. SC4SH, which is also the secretariat for RCE Greater Gombak (RCE G2) as a network organization plays a crucial role in connecting the internal stakeholder by facilitating and introducing the ESD approach to the internal campus community through the various channels of initiatives mentioned above.

Conclusion

This concludes that despite the challenges faced by this initiative, the project demonstrates the five pillars of 21st-century learning of UNESCO. It shows the demonstration of the University's transformational process towards a sustainable ecosystem and sustainable living. The project is aligned with the aim of RCE Greater Gombak for Whole Community Transformation Towards Sustainable Society through the empowerment of the community for circularity of food waste, 'From Fork to Farm' towards sustainable development. The circularity of food waste initiative with ESD approach that promotes inter- transdisciplinary in HEI is an illustration of how closing the loop of food waste provides a platform for potential CoP for transformative and experiential learning, the democratisation of knowledge and social learning with Islamic values for IIUM campus sustainability.

6

Change The World

By Suhaimi Mhd. Sarif

Introduction

According to a report by the National Solid Waste Management Department (Jabatan Pengurusan Sisa Pepejal Negara) in 2012, Malaysia produces food waste the highest (31% - 45%) in comparison to other types of waste and 44.5% of food waste come from households (National Solid Waste Management Department, 2013). In addition to that, Solid Waste Corporation of Malaysia (SWCorp) reported in 2015, that the food waste in Malaysia reached 15, 000 tonnes daily including 3,000 tonnes that was still fit for consumption and should not have been discarded (Malaysia Kini, 2016). In 1994, the government had already initiated the privatisation and federalisation of waste management services in Malaysia. However, the issue of food waste management only became the focus of the government in 2015 with the development of a National Strategic Plan for Food Waste Management. The project aimed to divert food waste from entering landfill, to properly treat food waste and to effectively recover gas emissions from landfills. The biggest threat of food waste in landfills is the emission of greenhouse gasses (GHG). GHG can contribute to respiratory diseases from smog and air pollution. Worse scenario, it can also cause climate change by trapping heat (Nunez, 2019). In the hope of controlling the damage from further inflicting the community, a group of academicians, researchers, and experts from International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) came together and developed a programme with the focus of reducing household food waste through sustainable vegetable gardens.

The team understood that the cause of household food waste comes from irresponsible consumption. This conclusion can be supported with the aforementioned statistics reported by Malaysiakini in 2016. The team also realised that a circular economy-based project is the best approach to reducing waste sustainably. Hence, "Change The World" was chosen as the name of this project to embody the end result of a simple initiative that could change the world for the better.

Through this project, the community was able to learn about ecology management and started to appreciate flora and fauna. With the obvious reasons of reducing food and kitchen waste and teaching the community to be responsible consumers, vegetable gardens can also help them save money and strengthen relationships through interaction between neighbours and break the individualism of suburban life. Change the World will help the community of Taman Desa Gemilang, Gombak to establish a vegetable garden on idle neighbourhood land. The crops would later be used by the community and in the long run, it would reduce food waste and improve their consumer practices.

Taman Desa Gemilang, Gombak is located at the north-east of IIUM Gombak Campus. The housing area is populated with middle and low income families. Given the density of the population is from housing, businesses and industrial activities, food supply is never a problem. However, the post-consumption effect has become apparent from the increasing volume of food waste produced by the community of Taman Desa Gemilang. Despite this, there are members among the community who are fully conscious of the negative impact and have started initiatives to mitigate irresponsible consumption and food wastage by building their vegetable gardens and composting system. Although efforts by the local community had been made, awareness in sustainability was still lacking. The team addressed this challenge through engagement with Consumer Association Penang (CAP) in which the aspects of responsible consumerism and sustainable solutions was brought to discussion.

Collaboration of Project Partners

Department of Business Administration, Kulliyyah of Economics and Management Sciences (KENMS) proposed to collaborate with Consumer Association Penang (CAP) on sustainable development issues related to consumerism. The discourse of consumerism is part of business administration, particularly in the marketing discipline.

Realising the need to transfer the gems from CAP to IIUM, a meeting was set with top management of the university which includes Honourable Rector, Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dato' Dzulkifli Abdul Razak. The meeting was fruitful with the outcome that a Tawhidic paradigm was recommended as an objective to manifest fundamental duties of humans as servants and vicegerents of Allah as outlined in Figure 1.
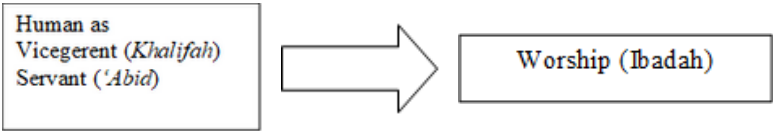
Figure 1

Both lecturers and students have common duties as servants ('ibād al-Rahmān), vicegerents (khulafā' fī al-arḍ) and true believers (al-mu'minūn). The ultimate goal is to worship Allah by giving the best service for the benefit of mankind, creating a balanced and harmonious human. According to Al-Faruqi (1992), humans must be made to understand that they have fulfilled the duty of Divine trust (al-amānah) and obligatory duties (al-furūḍ). Humans have the power of understanding (ulū al-Albāb) when they integrate faith (īmān), knowledge ('ilm) with thinking, feeling and action into obligatory duties (al-furūḍ), roles (al-amānah) and expectations (al-ghāyah).

Consumer Association of Penang (CAP) has vast experience in giving the best service for mankind. The team aims to acquire knowledge ('ïlm), experience and wisdom (hikmah) from them. This treasure of knowledge ('ïlm), experience and wisdom (hikmah) is very valuable. The treasure (khazānah) at CAP comprised of religious (al-diniyyah), rational (al-'aqlaniyyah), practical religion ('ilm al-mu'amālah). CAP integrates these elements, with God's guided knowledge ('ilm al-shar'iyy) and human's intellectual ('ilm al-'aqliyyah). The ultimate aim of CAP is to bring optimum benefit to human civilisation and protection of human's well-being, wellness, and welfare.

The group postulated that the cooperation between Kulliyyah of Economics and Management Sciences IIUM and Consumer Association of Penang could enhance the effort to produce balanced and harmonious humans to advocate for good life and livelihood. KENMS IIUM is in the business of producing graduates with a balance of religion (al-diniyyah), rational (al-'aqlaniyyah) and human's intellectual ('ilm al-'aqliyyah). However, there is a lack of human intellect ('ilm al-'aqliyyah) due to the lack of experience and wisdom (hikmah). Therefore, activists who graduated from KENMS IIUM would be having inadequate practical religion ('ilm al-mu'amālah).
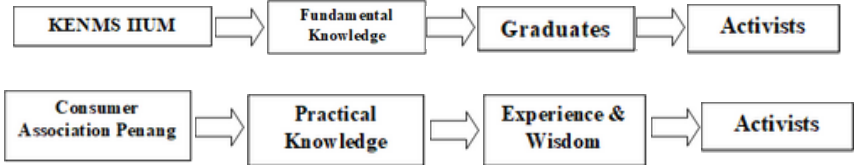

Figure 2

Inspiration from Consumer Association Penang

'Change The World' was a manifestation of inspiration gained from a session with Consumer Association Penang (CAP). The precious sharing session by SM Idris highlighted their journey of manifesting Basmalah in their daily life and in the establishment of CAP.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah—the Most Compassionate, Most Mercifu.

He lived with this 'Basmalah' as the foundation in his activism. Everything is in the name of Allah. Living by the name of Allah with the attributes of 'Ar-Rahmān' (the Most Compassionate) and 'Ar-Rahīm' (the Most Merciful), the challenges and difficulties in his activism does make him upset or surrender.

The attributes of Allah provided him to work with anyone with common objective, which is to bring mercy to all. In his consumerism activism, anything that is harmful to anyone, it becomes a duty to remove the harm to bring back mercy to humans and human civilisation. Protection and preserving human welfare, wellness and well-being are the duties of all humans. This protection enables the preservation of human existence. The five necessities are faith (dīn), life (nafs), intellect ('aql), lineage (nasl) and wealth (māl).

In short, SM Idris reflected the foundation of activism with the Tawhidic paradigm and guided by Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah.

The session included a tour to the gallery of books and exhibition materials and a site visit on the urban vegetable garden at the backyard of the association. The advocacy of healthy consumerism is a call for people to protect their life. Protection of life (hifz al-nafs) is a necessity (ḍaruriyyāt) of human existence. Unhealthy food consumption and unhealthy lifestyle led to various medical conditions such as gallstone, diabetes, and arthritis. This effort requires persistency and consistency and SM Idris imbued the effort with the spirit of Basmalah. CAP develops volunteers and research to continue with advocacy efforts.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ
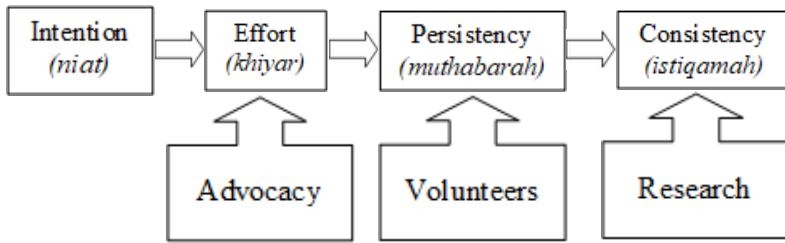
Figure 3

CAP and the Vegetable Gardens

Vegetable garden allows for empty lands to be cultivated with vegetables. People could enjoy healthy life through gardening activities and consume fresh vegetables. Food waste from the kitchen is readily available for fertilizers. CAP starts work with Basmalah, progresses with Basmalah, shares with Basmalah and enhances with Basmalah. 'In the name of Allah' means faith and obedience. Obedience with faith allows for piety (taqwa) in the forms of fear and hope. As for Basmalah with human, it recognises love and care in the forms of peace (sakīnah), affection (mawaddah) and mercy (rahmah). The Basmalah for other creatures or the environment recognises responsibility in the forms of trust, duties, and expectations.
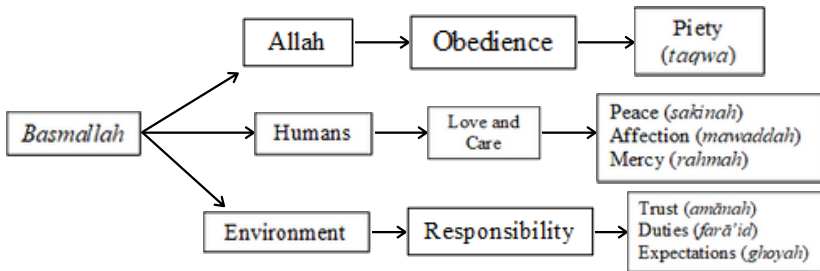
Figure 4

The team was impressed with the 'recyclable' approach used for the urban vegetable garden at the association. The team discovered few areas that could be replicated in the campus to bring institutional change into practice such as curriculum development, advocacy and the vegetable garden.

With Basmalah reflection learned from CAP, the team decided to pursue with "Change The World " project through curriculum development, advocacy and vegetable garden.

Establishing The Vegetable Garden

'Change the World Vegetable Garden' project proposal was well-received by the university authority, mainly the Development Division of IIUM and Daya Bersih. This is a showcase of how the Whole Institution Transformation towards sustainability took place on operational level. Upon agreement between the Department of Business Administration, Development Division and Daya Bersih, the first task was to convert the designated area into "Change the World" vegetable garden.

Engaging the Students

The transfer of knowledge occurred in the classroom through various decision-making techniques namely brainstorming, Nominal Group Technique and Shura. The discussion required students to apply strategic management and decision science knowledge. The second transfer of knowledge was through practice. All students in strategic management attended the fieldwork of knowledge transfer from landscape specialists of IIUM Development Division and Daya Bersih Sdn. Bhd.. The engaging session was impressive when students were applying knowledge in the classroom into the fieldwork. As a result from the engagement with students, the students managed to conduct a few projects which replicated responsible consumption lessons from the "Change The World" project.

No	Topic	Objectives	Expected Outcome/Outcome
1	Education consumers	To provide education for all	Able to know between useful and harmful consumerism to a group of teenagers
2	Nutritious food consumption	To differentiate between junk food and nutritious food consumption	Able to provide knowledge about nutritious food consumption for a group of students
3	Internet usage	To be disciplined in internet usage	Able to use internet wisely and responsibly
4	Cashless transactions	To practice cashless transactions	At least 30% students to use cashless transactions
5	Reusable food containers	To reduce usage of plastic containers	At least 30% students to use reusable food containers
6	Plain water consumption	To encourage more plain water consumption	80% students consume plain water
7	Friendship	To establish bonding with people from different races	80% students makes friends from different races
8	Crowd funding from Recycling	To raise fund from selling of recycle items	80% of classmates collect recycle items and sell them to contribute to charity
9	Homelessness	To give awareness to people the feeling of being homelessness	All classmates are given awareness about homelessness
10	Breakfast consumption	To give awareness on importance of taking breakfast	All classmates are given awareness the importance of breakfast: · Boost energy · Helps control weight · Boost brainpower
11	Halal diet consumption	To encourage in making halal diet consumption a way of life	All classmates to subscribe to halal diet consumption

Table 1: Students' "Change the World" Projects

Engaging the Community

The Department invited nearby communities to learn about growing and developing urban vegetable growing. The interaction enables the department to facilitate transfer and sharing of knowledge on vegetable garden between the gardening experts from IIUM and the community, including the indigenous knowledge about home gardening. Members of the project also learned something from the community on effective and practical ways of maintaining vegetable gardens.

Curriculum Development

A curriculum based on the whole 'Change The World' project was developed. An elective course, namely MGT 2011 Sustainability: Society and Business was designed and successfully conducted beginning from September 2020. There were 16 students enrolled and they successfully completed the course. The synopsis of the course is illustrated in Figure 5.

COURSE OUTLINE

1. **Course Title:** Sustainability: Society and Business

2. **Course Code:** MGT 2011

3. **Credit Value:** 3

4. **MQF Level:** 6

5. **Affected Batch:** Semester 1, 2020/2021 onward

6. **Centre of Studies:** Kulliyyah of Economics and Management Sciences

7. **Department/Unit:** Business Administration

8. **Course Synopsis:** This course provides a comprehensive introduction to developing knowledge on sustainable goal for society and business. Firstly, it provides an introduction to sustainability. Then it defines the social, human and economic dimensions of sustainability from an Islamic perspective. Secondly, it focuses on achieving knowledge on specific sustainability topics which go well beyond natural resource extraction and use. They are linked to environmental indicators such as water quality and ecosystem diversity, and social indicators such as human health and economic growth. Finally, this course highlights opportunities for the transition towards sustainable society and business, a key element in achieving sustainable development.

9. **Course Classification within the Curriculum:** Elective

10. **Prerequisite(s) (if any):** None

Figure 5

Advocacy

The advocacy part of the project was manifested through education on consumerism. A two-hour interactive session was conducted with the aim to encourage IIUM community to practice responsible consumption, especially in the fasting month of Ramadan. The 'Change The World' vegetable garden was then visited by several people including the representatives from CAP and Daya Bersih. DBSB also contributed fertilisers made from food waste from several cafes on campus.

Learning from Others

The group also visited a nearby nursery to learn about vegetable gardening. The educational trip was very productive. Members learned some techniques on sustaining vegetable gardens.

Members of the project visited nearby nursery

IIUM Hon Rector, Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dato' Dzulkifli Abdul Razak visited the garden on 8th of August 2019 to witness the progress of the garden.

Tan Sri Rector demonstrated some indigenous ways of planting some plants to the staff and students.

Manifestation of Whole Community Transformation and IIUM Agenda

Some residents from Desa Gemilang who acquired knowledge and experience from the garden replicated the project at their respective home garden. Taman Desa Gemilang is located 3 kilometers from IIUM Gombak campus. The housing estate is located within Kampung Sungai Pusu and has been occupied since November 2007. The land was part of Kampung Sungai Pusu. There are more than 300 terrace houses in Taman Desa Gemilang with approximately 800 residents. Most of the residents are employed in private and public sectors. Even though the housing estate is near to IIUM Gombak, only a handful of the residents are staff of IIUM. The main entity that represented the community is Persatuan Penduduk Taman Desa Gemilang. There is a surau that is managed by Jawatankuasa Surau Fatimah Az-Zahra' appointed by Selangor Islamic Council. Besides the two entities, there is another entity known as Kawasan Rukuntetangga Taman Desa Gemilang under the purview of the National Unity Department. The garden yielded fresh and healthy edible vegetables and fruits. The cassava gave the community both the leaves and the fruit.

Sejahtera Academic Framework and Change The World

This project learned about the practice of Basmalah for more than 40 years in the advocacy for goodness at Consumer Association of Penang (CAP). Basmalah has driven CAP to be consistent and persistent in advocating goodness, particularly in consumerism (Figure 4).

In comparison between the practice of Basmalah framework at CAP for more than 40 years and the Sejahtera Academic Framework experience for 38 years (since 1983), the similarity for both is to spread mercy to humanity through dedicated and persistent efforts.

	IIUM Sejahtera Academic Framework	CAP Basmallah Framework
1	maqasid al-shariah, protecting faith, life, knowledge, wealth and lineage	In the name of Allah Al-Rahman (Most Compassionate) Al-Rahim (Most Merciful)
2	vision and mission statements	General goodness in consumerism
3	learning activities *learning to know *learning to do *learning to live together *learning to be *learning to become	Advocacy, Research and Education *learning to know *learning to do *learning to live together
4	formal academic programmes	Not available
5	non-formal academic programmes	Informal Education
6	eco-system (bi'ah) through pedagogy, social spaces, provision of facilities, and support systems	Not available
7	Philosophy or guideline in producing balanced graduates (physical, emotion, spiritual, intellect, socialisation, environment, servants of Allah) in executing duties as vicegerants (khālifah), trust (amānah), knowledge acquisition (iqra'), mercy (rahmatan lil-alāmin)	Not specific

Table 2

This project aims to practice Basmalah as proven by CAP with IIUM Sejahtera Academic Framework through responsible consumption by being careful in spending groceries and being responsible for kitchen waste. The project is managed by students and staff of Kulliyyah of Economics and Management Sciences. This community is familiar with responsible spending and consumption. The knowledge in Economics and Management Sciences integrated with ecological knowledge taught people to learn about the coexistence of people and other living things as in line with the spirit of ESD. The partnership with the community reflects the sociology of neighbourhood through vegetable farming projects which breaks the individualism of suburban life. The key activities are backyard home vegetable gardens, benefiting idle lands in neighbourhood and neighbourhood social activities in backyards and idle lands for vegetable farming. With the participation of 150 academic audiences (staff and students), the project produced 10 community vegetable gardens, and 10 community projects conducted by students at their respective homes.

This project has incorporated a portion of IIUM Sejahtera Academic Framework in the "Change the World" project from March 2019 – December 2020.

	IIUM Sejahtera Academic Framework	Change the World
1	*maqasid al-shariah, protecting faith, life, knowledge, wealth and lineage*	Protection of life with responsible consumption and healthy life style (150 participants) Protection of wealth with no waste and optimisation of income (150 participants and 10 communities)
2	vision and mission statements	Tawhidic paradigm and Basmallah
3	learning activities *learning to know *learning to do *learning to live together *learning to be *learning to become	Learning activities *learning to know – vegetable garden *learning to do – gardening with community *learning to live together – healthy life *learning to be – not yet *learning to become – not yet
4	formal academic programmes	MGT 2011 Sustainability: Business and Society
5	non-formal academic programmes	Vegetable gardening
6	eco-system (bi'ah) through pedagogy, social spaces, provision of facilities, and support systems	Flagship projects Istidamah
7	Philosophy or guideline in producing balanced graduates (physical, emotion, spiritual, intellect, socialisation, environment, servants of Allah) in executing duties as vicegerants (khālifah), trust (amānah), knowledge acquisition (iqra'), mercy (rahmatan lil-alāmin)	Not yet quantified.

Table 3

Conclusion

This project manifested Education for Sustainable Development through formal and informal education programmes. The most notable programme is the home vegetable gardening by staff, students and communities. This project is also strengthened by the development of an elective course, Sustainability: Society and Business, showcasing the integration into formal curriculum. The project is primarily driven by Tawhidic paradigm, maqāṣid al-sharīʿah and Basmalah orientation before the introduction of IIUM Sejahtera Academic Framework in August 2020. Although this project has undergone a remarkable journey and has been acknowledged as an Outstanding Flagship Project by RCE Awards 2020, the efforts to continuously improve the project is still taking place and will continue 'Changing The World' through Whole-Community Transformation.

There can be no greater gift than that of giving one's time and energy to help others without expecting anything in return

NELSON MANDELA

Section 4: Sejahtera

7 IIUM Covid-19 Psychosocial Support Team (IMPaCT)
By Pamilia Lourdunathan

Introduction

During May 2020, the United Nations Secretary-General declared the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic had caused mental distress which necessitated specific interventions. It was found that youths reported having poorer mental health while adults who suffered with poorer physical health conditions seemed to report a higher level of mental health issues.

After the implementation of Movement Control Order (MCO) by the government of Malaysia, gatherings at all places were prohibited including religious services, educational services and social gatherings. During this time, various educational institutions in Malaysia changed their mode of teaching and learning from physical to virtual. As such, it was found that the sudden change in the mode of teaching and learning due to the potential risk of infection of COVID-19 had caused several psychosocial issues such as the feeling of isolation, increased anxiety levels and a high level of stress to the community and students. This global phenomenon is also observed locally in the community of International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).

The high level of mental health issues with regards to severe stress levels and depressive symptoms among students not only affected their educational performance, but also caused self-injurious behaviour as well as suicidal attempts (Patsali, Mousa, Papadopoulou, Papadopoulou, Kaparounaki, Diakogiannis, Fountoulakis, 2020). In a study that examined anxiety levels among students in Malaysia, it was found that 57% of the students were facing moderate to severe anxiety symptoms, while only 37% of the students were mindful of mental health support services which were provided by their institutions (Irfan, Shahudin, Hooper, Akram, & Ghani, 2020). Hence, it was found that it became gravely imperative for the mental health of youths, particularly students to be assessed and addressed.

Mental health cases around the world have also been on the rise over the past few years. This increasing trend is worrying especially because a large portion of the population are from younger age groups, where they are supposed to be at their highest level of productivity. With COVID-19 pandemic setting in, the community is exposed to higher vulnerability for mental issues as the pandemic carries with it various psychological stressors such as loss of income, interruption in education process, health deterioration, lack of social activities and much more. In short, the IIUM community and the society at large is searching for psychological assistance through this challenging time.

Specifically, for IIUM, the establishment of IIUM Covid-19 Psychosocial Support Team (IMPaCT) is really timely.

The 'IMPaCT' Project

Every impactful story has its beginning. The foundation of the psychosocial care team began when the Movement Control Order commenced on 18th of March 2020. It was found that there was a need to be effective in handling the situation of the pandemic and its impact on the IIUM Community, hence the establishment of the team. The team began with its initial name called the IIUM Covid-19 Psychosocial Support Team which began with 14 members. The team then grew with added members of various faculties joining in with the common aim of embarking on the mission of empowerment of well-being. At present, the team comprises of 22 members in total from various faculties mainly Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (KIRKHS), Kulliyyah of Information and Communication Technology (KICT) and Kulliyyah of Architecture and Environmental Design (KAED). The team members are hopeful for more diversity from various other faculties within IIUM to join us in this mission. Every individual in the team has his or her unique features to offer as each brings their own passion for the love and betterment of the community.

The individuals from the team derived from various departments within the university (i.e. Department of Psychology, Department of Usuluddin and Comparative Religion, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Department of Information Systems, Department of English Language and Literature, Department of Fiqh and Usul al-Fiqh, Department of General Studies, Department of Architecture).

As the team continued to provide psychosocial support to its community, the team then noticed that there were several high-risk psychosocial-emotional issues that were being faced by the staff and students of IIUM community which necessitated immediate psychological intervention. As such, the birth of e-psychosocial care unit took place comprising of members mainly from the Department of Psychology and the Department of General Studies from various specializations such as Developmental Psychology, Counselling Psychology, Clinical Psychology, Physiological Psychology, General Psychology as well as members with Psychosocial-spiritual specialisations.

IMPaCT is coordinated and led by this steering committee with the primary aim of fostering community engagement, shared visions, missions, and goals among the IIUM community and the public at large while establishing collaborative effort with governance structures.

The objectives and goals of this project are mainly two-fold, namely, (1) producing psychosocial-spiritual educational content and (2) providing e-psychosocial support to the IIUM community at large as well as a community outreach to the larger spectrum of the public via social media with regards to the psychosocial-spiritual educational content. The coordination and management of the team is in accordance with the team organisational chart and is collectivistic in nature.

The flow of its operation is mainly in a way whereby every team member provides suggestions and feedback regarding any work tasks related to the said objectives and the team collectively takes charge by delegation and volunteerism. The team's coordinator together with other upper management members would then help to facilitate this process by ensuring follow-ups and by helping to steer and empower the members of this project. Upon completion of work tasks, a group consensus will be established as team members present their final output of any tasks completed, among each other, after which the outcomes of the tasks performed (ie. psychosocial-spiritual educational infographic content via posters and comic art illustrations or articles and e-psychosocial support) would then be launched and disseminated to the IIUM Community and society at large via social media. It was through this method that then caught the attention of the National Security Council which led to the establishment of an alliance with the said organisation.

The Impact and Challenges

The well accepted establishment of IMPaCT by the IIUM community was evident in the nearly 300 sessions of e-counselling conducted during the period of MCO. Apart from that, the comic art illustrations and posters on psychosocial-spiritual educational content successfully attracted a large audience, leading to the establishment of a strategic collaboration between IMPaCT and the National Security Council.

IMPaCT has successfully facilitated the promotion and the raising of awareness of well-being for all staff and students of IIUM. This was achieved through the empowerment and sustainability of ongoing psychosocial support rendered to the community.

Furthermore, the teaching and learning environment was improved through a whole-institution approach by leveraging on the capacities of the members of the team in helping members of IIUM community cope through the COVID-19 pandemic through an approach called ERTL (emergency remote teaching and learning) and at present, through an approach called HTL (hybrid teaching and learning).

The real impact could be illustrated in the formation of the Mental Health Strategic Planning Task Force of the university after which is a showcase of the strong commitment of the university in strengthening the mental health services for its community.

As with most establishments, the team faced several challenges in its process of delivering the services rendered. Among some of the challenges include issues relating to the transformation of various development of mental health programmes into sustainable long-term practices. Apart from that, sustaining the networking and collaboration with ongoing efforts with regards to policy makers is found to be very challenging. With the fast-paced change in environment and ever-changing needs of the members of our community, there is a need for a more structured and sustainable framework upon which there may be higher demands in structure and feasibility.

Another apparent challenge being faced by the team is the growing number of clinical and non-clinical cases among the members of the community necessitating a higher amount of manpower in delivering psychological sessions online as well as psychosocial support to accommodate the demands and needs of the said community. Also, there is a need to ensure that the psychological services rendered are in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA compliant psychological sessions). Moving forwards, there is a need in ensuring that this be obtained as the structure of delivering e-psychosocial and psychological services continue to develop.

Further development would also benefit from a larger amount of ongoing support from all members of the community in order to accommodate a larger amount of collaborators and external organisations. This is because, at present due to the current size of the team, the main limitation would be manpower in addressing the needs of external communities in order to expand our horizon of rendering psychosocial support to the community at large.

Regional Centre of Expertise as Leverage for Success

Regional Centre of Expertise is a global network which encourages the spirit of co-learning among multiple stakeholders which include academia, government agencies, industry players, non-governmental agencies (NGOs) as well as the community. This spirit is totally embedded in the establishment of IMPaCT. Various partners involved in the current project were able to have a wider outreach within the community. The partnership helped facilitate and support academics' teaching and learning capacities, but it also led to the expansion of building partnerships, collaborations and a sense of togetherness to help support multiple, ongoing activities.

The university has always emphasized on the importance of establishing and accomplishing the interlinked Global Goals or better known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the United Nations. As such, various stakeholders and societies as well as organisations within the university share a similar blueprint of aiming to move towards attaining various behavioural goals in order to establish the main outcome goals of the SDGs.

Due to the need for more manpower in championing the work tasks of the project, strategic collaborations between various stakeholders allows for a collective effort and partnership for all members involved in gearing towards the implementation of a sustainable development common platform through which psychological and psychosocial help is rendered.

Also, while many of these stakeholders are well equipped in terms of certain skills and cooperation from its members, there is a need for certain experiences, training and professional backgrounds. As such, a collaboration with various parties and stakeholders would increase the likelihood of the success of the project by drawing a higher engagement rate among the community members.

Hence, as the current project team, IMPaCT comprises of a large group of individuals with various fields of expertise and together with its present collaborators would yield a talent pool that is highly vast and competent to enable a group of like-minded people to work together towards achieving a common goal.

The various partners and stakeholders have also found that with the common goal at hand together with the current project's theme has led to a progress in their work tasks while also helping to reduce the large weight on solely one party as it becomes a shared experience as a pool of individuals working towards a common goal has been established. It is hoped that this would enable the establishing of good health and well-being, a reduction of inequalities as well as peace, justice and the ascertaining of a strong institution as outlined in SDG 3, 10 and 16 respectively.

This project will help develop global linkages that would further help strengthen the related activities involved in this project. For example, efforts in attempting to empower psychological wellbeing during Covid-19 is shared with other people nationally and internationally through multiple platforms. Newspaper articles, webinars, infographics, comics, website contents, article and book publication are some of the means of communication with the global community during this battle. Being a member of the Regional Global Centre of Expertise (RCE) global network surely opens up opportunities to learn and collaborate with other RCEs around the world especially on mental wellbeing issues as no region is free from the impact of this pandemic. Although borders between countries are still closed and no flights could connect us physically, the spirit of co-learning and upholding humanity has been deeply embedded in each of us, as Malaysian tagline for the fight against COVID-19 #kitajagakita, or easily translated as 'We take care of each other', IMPaCT opens its doors to work hand in hand with other people around the world to ensure mental wellbeing of the community in this tough time.

Some of our main internal collaborators comprised of various parties within the IIUM community. The collaborative project in providing psychosocial support to IIUM students via a Psychosocial Support Collaborative Project with (1) Psychology Services Unit, Department of Psychology; (2) e-psychosocial support unit under the IIUM Mental Health and Psychosocial Care Team (IMPaCT); (3) Master of Human Sciences in Psychology (Clinical and Counselling Psychology Masters Trainee) - supervised by a registered Clinical Psychologist; (4) Psychology Students' Association (PSYCSTA) under the purview of Social, Engagement and Welfare (SEW) Committee of the Department of Psychology, (5) Counselling and Career Services Centre (CCSC) and (6) IIUM Student Union has commenced and is ongoing. This joint venture was done through a Student Development and Community Development Joint Programme effort.

The team also reaches out to external collaborators in its effort to establish community engagement to establish sustainable development in fulfilling its objectives. Its external collaborators include Majlis Keselamatan Negara Malaysia (National Security Council) and the Ministry of Higher Education (KPT) and the community which play significant roles as strategic partners in the execution of the team's projects. The team also had World Media Engagement at an international level by being featured on BBC World News as well as National Media Engagement through several features in local newspaper articles during the pandemic.

'IMPaCT' as Translation of IIUM's Strategic Direction on The Ground

IIUM has pioneered a unique Malaysian model of a holistic university that addresses sustainable development issues through the application of Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah as its primary foundation. As the mission of IIUM has been to nurture its community towards leading a balanced and harmonious lifestyle by fostering individuals who are deemed as Insan Sejahtera through a values-based holistic integrated education. Through the culture of Iqra' and Tawhīd, it was aimed that comprehensive excellence would be achieved in order to help ensure that the community outreach project attained may be in line with Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah in achieving the sustainable development (SDGs) aimed at mercy for all (rahmatan lil ʿālamīn). As such, the team's efforts also include the inculcation of elements of Islam through the Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah principles in its developed practices.

The project had several strategic focus areas in which community engagement was done through global relevance and responsible research even through the establishment of a psychosocial-spiritual educational website and book publication. In terms of institutional initiatives, the team is in line with the Sejahtera Academic Framework in which there is the practice of nurturing Budiman for institutional sustainability as well as the fostering of Insan Sejahtera through spirituality and values driven approaches. This is evident in the main key deliverables and outcomes of the team's projects.

IMPaCT and Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah

IMPaCT emphasizes its engagement with both the IUM community and the local community. As a team that is a part of an educational institution, it is also important for this team to play the role as agents in delivering and implementing the concept and application of sustainability, knowledge, and ideas to the community.

As such, IMPaCT applies the approach of sustainability in its mission, vision, and the application of the Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah strategy in its community engagement efforts. At present, IMPaCT is a medium of outreach programmes that attempts to extend its sustainability concept, especially in health and wellbeing towards IIUM community and the local community. The progressive approach that inculcates Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah in its agenda towards sustainability that has been undertaken by IIUM is one of the influential agents of change within the IIUM community. It is hoped that the objectives of IMPaCT may contribute to the strategic direction of the university specifically on sustainable development.

One of the important components of IMPaCT is its community engagement that is based on building an ongoing and permanent relationship via a collaborative aim to improve wellbeing.

As Jasser (2005) termed the concept of Maqāṣid so eloquently to a sense of purpose, principle, objective, intent and goal, it is evident that shariah is based on wisdom and the support of people's welfare. As such, justice, wisdom, goodness and mercy are all important components of the *Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* principle.

An interesting concept regarding this situation is that *Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* is purposed towards helping people with their human welfare and this was indicated by Imam al-Ghazali who mentioned that public interest is vital in protecting and serving the shariah objectives. Public interest or also known as *maslahah* covers the preservation of faith, life, intellect, progeny, and wealth.

As such, IMPaCT aims to attain the different components outlined in *maslahah* whereby it is aimed that through various psychosocial-spiritual activities done, faith, spirituality, religion, and belief may be strengthened. It was also found that through several outreaches and e-psychosocial support sessions, life may be preserved and wellbeing may be ensured.

The teaching and learning process through the education system in IIUM and the psychoeducational activities that relate to promoting remote teaching and learning tips and techniques aim to preserve the intellect of the community within IIUM. Further, as IMPaCT has also pursued several community outreach efforts by extending support and community outreach activities (such as the outreach to SPM ProMax 2020 batch of students), this effort was also aimed at preserving the intellect within the future generation of youths.

Also, as IMPaCT aimed at providing psychosocial support via an online platform, it was also found that the social system was preserved. These are some of the criteria that align with *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* in the role of IMPaCT in serving the community by attempting to meet the needs of the community. As IMPaCT was guided by the basis of Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah, IIUM then carried out its duties in supporting the IIUM community and the local community outside IIUM during the Covid-19 pandemic by centering on the need to preserve lives. Also, sustainable methods were incorporated to ensure its sustainability in order to ensure that the objectives and implementation of activities carried out are in line with the objectives of *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as this may be a useful tool and framework in guiding the development and implementation of IMPaCT's activities. Along the process of implementing its activities, several activities were prioritized depending on the urgent needs that were needed. For example, when many students needed to limit their movement and to stay within their mahallah rooms, many students faced various psychosocial issues and problems that served as the triggering factors which caused some to be under mental distress. Hence, IMPaCT jumped in to provide mental health support through an online platform.

Some of the fundamental goals of the Sustainable Development Goals are also in line with the objectives of *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. The framework for Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah is also based on the Maslahah pyramid and it can be seen that many of the objectives of IMPaCT are in line with the components in this pyramid. As such, the components of *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, Sustainable Development Goals, and IIUM's Mission and Vision aim to fill the existing need in actualizing the mutual targets towards improving well-being and the welfare of the community with the aim of producing Insan Sejahtera.

The compatibility of the SDGs and *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and IIUM's vision and mission, as well as the Sejahtera Academic Framework, prove to improve wellbeing and to promote a healthy life, good education, good social status, equality, and the opportunity to grow.

In this context, the SDG and *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* paradigm which aligns with the IIUM Mission and Vision helps IMPaCT to comprehensively address the psychosocial issues faced by the community as one of its priorities. Teaching and learning activities are also incorporated and fashioned in a way whereby more activities may be carried out in a train the trainers sort of fashion. For example, as some of the challenges being faced is a lack of manpower to cater to the many community members who are faced with various psychosocial issues, the train the trainers approach may be helpful and useful in aiding the community members. This is done by the team members of IMPaCT providing training to peer psychosocial support volunteers who comprised of students (peers) who wish to provide active listening and empathic understanding services in the form of peer psychosocial support sessions to fellow students. This has helped the team IMPaCT have a domino effect in helping a larger group of the community. The team then continues to grow exponentially by spreading its wings of rendering mental health support to the masses. Also, teaching-learning through course assessments have also been fashioned and composed in a manner whereby psychosocial-spiritual educational campaigns or support groups have been formed to help aid students and staff.

An interesting part of the framework of the SDGs and *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, as well as IIUM Mission and Vision components, can be seen in its primary objectives whereby it encompasses all developmental schemes which are aimed at improving the wellbeing of the human community by meeting its essentialities of life.

A clear indication of this can be seen in three levels of *maqāṣid*-based public interests (*masāleh*), necessities (*ḍaruriyyāt*), needs (*hajiyyat*) and luxuries (*tahsiniyyat*). Therefore, the *maqāṣid* framework demands the implementation of the three different levels of public interests in order to confirm the preservation of human life (*hifz al-nafs*) and dignity (*hifz al-irḍ*) which is key to the higher objectives of shariah (Auda, 2008). There is a wonderful piece to the puzzle of the prism of the *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* which emphasises the preservation and introduction of the new awqaf which aims to provide and care for the needs of various vulnerable groups such as the less privileged and the widows, those who are divorced, orphans, women, the elderly, children and other less fortunate or other individuals of marginalised status. All of these are vital for the achievement of an inclusive development. It is hoped the IMPaCT would continue to reach out to those suffering from impoverished backgrounds be it in terms of mental health or physical health or emotional health and education.

These *maqāṣiḍ*-based development activities which prove to be inclusive in nature reflect on the alignment of the SDGs and *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as well as the Sejahtera Academic Framework which helps promote the notion of living a life that is holistic in nature and to help one another attain the process and goal of becoming Insan Sejahtera. This is vital as IMPaCT attempts to respond to the institution's developmental, psychological, and mental health needs as well as by addressing several challenges of the community.

Protection of Faith

Several projects were conducted with the primary aim of ensuring the incorporation of Islamic perspective into its delivery and output. For example, during the pandemic, as an effort to provide psychological sessions to the IIUM community, a collaborative effort was done involving IMPaCT and Psychology Services Unit (PSU) through a 4 weekly sessions workshop during Semester 3 with invited guest speakers from interdisciplinary backgrounds. As such, this was done with Psychology Services unit (PSU) and the MHSc in Psychology team comprising trainees of the Master of Human Sciences in Psychology (Clinical and Counselling Psychology Masters Trainee) - supervised by Clinical Psychologists and lecturers at the Department of Psychology and interns of the Undergraduate Internship Training Programme. This programme aims to provide psychosocial and spiritual perspectives while sharing the Islamic principles and perspectives of each related topic. The main theme of this four series workshop was Managing Health, Mental Illness and Suicide. Besides this, some of the team members are also involved in an upcoming project called the Qalbun Salim App project in which it involves the preparing of psychospiritual contents for the app as well as the development of this application. The team recently also collaborated in a research that aims to develop an online modular prevention programme featuring elements of Islamic spirituality and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. With the main target group of young adults in distress during the pandemic, this study was conducted with the aim of evaluating the effectiveness of a prevention programme. This programme is funded by the International Institute of Islamic Thought and supported by IMPaCT as its internal collaborator in its promotion and recruitment of participants.

Protection of Life

IMPaCT has successfully facilitated the promotion and the raising of awareness of wellbeing for all staff and students. This is achieved through the empowerment and sustainability of ongoing psychosocial support. All of these were accomplished through the IIUM Community Outreach e-psychosocial support rendered to the undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as to the staff of IIUM.

Protection of Intellect

The team's efforts were in line with the principles of Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah also through the protection of intellect and this was evident through the many efforts done throughout the Movement Control Order as well as the Conditional Movement Control Order. The teaching and learning environment were able to be improved through a whole-institution approach by leveraging on the capacities of the members of the team in helping members of IIUM community cope through the COVID-19 pandemic through an approach called ERTL (emergency remote teaching and learning) and at present, through an approach called HTL (hybrid teaching and learning). The real impact could be illustrated in the formation of the Mental Health Strategic Planning Task Force of the university after which is a showcase of the strong commitment of the university in strengthening the mental health services for its community.

There were several efforts done both ongoing and upcoming with the purpose of fulfilling this principle of instilling psychosocial-spiritual elements in education. Among some of these efforts include the producing of psychosocial-spiritual educational content in the form of videos, posters and comic art illustrations with the aim of equipping the IIUM community and non-IIUM community members at the society at large with the readiness, resources and capacity in facing the pandemic and the many issues being faced. This was also done with the purpose of relating the experiences of the staff and students with the current situation being faced to help raise awareness on various issues. This included issues such as the importance of good healthcare, adherence to procedures and the current system, hygiene related behaviours, attitudinal change which may lead to positive behaviours when coping with the pandemic.

Other related activities include 'Study with Me' sessions which provide a virtual support of a therapeutic atmosphere of students studying together via an online medium, mental health webinars psychosocial-spiritual online talks by invited guest speakers, Shut Up and Write sessions as online writing sessions for undergraduate final year project and postgraduate research students to provide a virtual support of a therapeutic atmosphere of students writing together via an online

medium. There was also a community outreach activity session to SPM students of the 2020 batch who were found to be undergoing a turmoil of psychosocial issues and problems in facing the pandemic and a major examination with uncertainty and great concern. This activity was done to provide a safe space for Form 5 students to have a heart-to-heart sharing session with psychologists from IMPaCT team and the Department of Psychology academic members. Another project that is in line with this principle would be the production of booklets based on students' projects containing psychosocial-spiritual elements outlined in Islam and psychology.

IMPaCT and IIUM Mission Statements

The team's efforts were also in line with IIUM's mission statements particularly the 1st, 4th, 6th and 7th mission statements.

> **Mission 1:**
> To undertake the special and greatly needed task of reforming the contemporary Muslim mentality and integrating Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences in a positive manner.
> **Mission 4:**
> To nurture the quality of holistic excellence which is imbued with Islamic moral-spiritual values, in the process of learning, teaching, research, consultancy, publication, administration and student life.
> **Mission 6:**
> To enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilization dialogues in Malaysia as well as across communities and nations.
> **Mission 7:**
> To develop an environment that instills commitment for life-long learning and a deep sense of social responsibility among staff and students.

Based on the mission statements above, the team endeavoured to provide and organize various activities and projects that were in line with the mission statements of IIUM.

Among some of these activities included several training sessions for the psychosocial support collaborative project in which training was provided by 2 of IMPaCT's clinical psychologists in training the peer psychosocial support volunteers comprising of several members of the Psychology Students Association (PSYCSTA). The training has four modules which are (1) Side-Walk talk, (2) Heart-centered Listening, (3) Attending Behaviour and (4) Active Listening Skills and Empathy.

All of these training sessions aim at fulfilling the abovementioned mission statement, especially in developing a professional who is instilled with holistic excellence and able to integrate Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences in a positive manner.

There was also a talk organized by the Student Union which involved live webinar titled, 'Making Peace with the Isolation during the Pandemic: Navigating Anxiety and Loneliness' in which IMPaCT was contacted and a team member delivered a sharing session and a webinar regarding coping and managing anxiety in a more effective way.

Several upcoming activities are also expected to fulfil the inculcation of a deep sense of social responsibilities and commitment among students of IIUM. For example, peer-led psychological support groups for undergraduate students and postgraduate students are expected to foster positive dialogue sessions among the peers with the assistance of a guided and trained facilitator.

Also, the psychosocial-spiritual educational content in the form of academic and non-academic articles were published in a website created by team members of IMPaCT and the members of several Kulliyyah in IIUM. This is as illustrated in the web content section (Web content: https://flagship.iium.edu.my/eps/)

IMPaCT and Sustainable Development Goals

Based on the activities and deliverables done, the team's efforts and projects are in line with the Sustainable Development Goals number 3 (Good Health and well-being), 10 (Reduced inequalities) and 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions).

The importance of fostering a sustainable community with knowledge connectivity is vital to be developed at an institutional level. This can be done by promoting an effective synergy between agencies and relevant parties involved in order to develop a positive and holistic community equipped with positive wholesome functionality as an individual.

Various efforts were made and one of them being the transfer of valuable knowledge in the form of a book titled, "On Psychosocial Support during Covid-19 Pandemic". This was produced as a combined effort of synergy between the members of IMPaCT and the members of academics from the Kulliyyah.

IMPaCT and Sejahtera Academic Framework

IMPaCT also strives to concur with the Sejahtera Academic Framework as outlined in IIUM. Its activities are in line with the Sejahtera neighbourhood, Sustainable Campus, and Education for Sustainable Development. The team has the wellbeing of the staff and students of IIUM and their best interests at heart. It is of great importance that the assurance of the well-being of the staff and students be ascertained to foster holistic individuals within the IIUM community. It would be vital for us to instill the awareness and importance of becoming Insan Sejahtera, through the programmes, projects, and deliverables through this team. Many of the activities conducted were in synchronization with this direction and it is hoped that more synergised projects with the concept of Insan Sejahtera would be executed.

Contribution of IMPaCT to The Whole Community Transformation Agenda of RCE Greater Gombak

Our approach to psychological wellbeing during COVID-19 is shared with other people nationally and internationally through multiple platforms. Newspaper articles, webinars, infographics, comics, website contents, article and book publication are some of the means of communication with the global community during this battle. Being a member of the global RCE network surely opens up opportunities to learn and collaborate with other RCEs around the world especially on mental wellbeing issues as no region is free from the impact of this pandemic. Although borders between countries are still closed and no flights could connect us physically, the spirit of co-learning and upholding humanity has been deeply embedded in each of us, as Malaysian tagline for the fight against COVID-19 #kitajagakita, or easily translated as 'We take care of each other', IMPaCT opens up its door to work hand in hand with other people around the world to ensure mental wellbeing of the community in this tough time.

The impact of the project goes beyond what number could capture. IMPaCT has successfully facilitated the promotion and the raising of awareness of wellbeing for all staff and students. This is achieved through the empowerment and sustainability of ongoing psychosocial support. Furthermore, the teaching and learning environment was able to be improved through a whole-institution approach by leveraging on the capacities of the members of the team in helping members of IIUM

community cope through the COVID-19 pandemic through an approach called ERTL (emergency remote teaching and learning) and at present through an approach called HTL (hybrid teaching and learning).

The real impact could be illustrated in the formation of the Mental Health Strategic Planning Task Force of the university after which is a showcase of the strong commitment of the university in strengthening the mental health services for its community.

RCE network has contributed to the development of the project by enhancing collaboration among various stakeholders. This has led to the commence of various upcoming projects within the team's current almanac. The current stakeholders involved are the university's academics and researchers, Student Union (IIUMSU), the Psychology Student Association (PSYCSTA), Masters in Clinical and Counselling Psychology trainee students, Psychology Services Unit (PSU), volunteers and the current project, of which all parties involved work in the spheres of sustainable development psychosocial-spiritual growth.

Recently, IMPaCT received its honour in receiving an award from the United Nations University-Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) for the Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development: RCE Recognition Award- Honourable Mention- RCE Greater Gombak. This is in line with IIUM's vision in becoming the leading international centre of educational excellence which seeks to restore the dynamic and progressive role of the Muslim Ummah in all branches of knowledge and intellectual discourse. It is hoped that this would enable the establishment of good health and wellbeing, a reduction of inequalities as well as peace, justice and the ascertaining of a strong institution.

RCE Recognition Award

2020

Honourable Mention

RCE Greater Gombak

IIUM Mental Health and Psychosocial Care Team (IMPaCT)

This certificate is awarded to RCE Greater Gombak for its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being

REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE
ON EDUCATION FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ACKNOWLEDGED BY

UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY

Akio Takemoto
Programme Head, UNU-IAS

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RCE Greater Gombak Animal Shelter

By Zarinah Jan Yusof Khan

Introduction

As of late, we are witnessing an increase in the number of abandoned stray cats around IIUM campus in Gombak. Many of these stray cats are found to be either pregnant, injured, sick or too old to survive without proper care. The pregnant cats give birth to kittens in places accessible to them such as under the drains, behind abandoned furniture, in office corners and enclosed areas, and most of the kittens do not survive due to malnutrition, low immune system and airborne virus from the other infected cats or abuse from irresponsible human beings. The survivors will contribute to further increase in population and hence, the cycle continues. The injured, the sick and the aged ones have no choice but to linger around the cafeteria and beg for food and water for the sake of survival. They are seen as pests and most of the time, they are shooed away with the hope that they will just simply be away for good

وَمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَٰئِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُم ۚ مَّا فَرَّطْنَا فِي ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مِن شَيْءٍ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ

"And there is no creature on [or within] the earth or bird that flies with its wings except [that they are] communities like you. We have not neglected in the Register a thing. Then unto their Lord they will be gathered." (6 : 38)

In the verse above, Allah described that animals and birds have some similarities with human beings. They have nations and groups like human beings. This verse is not implying that animals have their own colony. Rather, it implies that they are acting according to the order of God and the process is under the control of God and everything is recorded in the knowledge of Allah. The last point of this verse says that all animals will also be resurrected just like human beings.

In Islam, a worship which is perfect can be understood in a practical form: faith, Islam and compassion or Ihsān. Faith is the basis of creed or ʿakīdah for Muslims who focus on believing in its pillars with full belief. Islam, on the other hand, is a manifestation of faith by performing acts of worship based on the methods and ways that have been set. Performing ʿibādah with sincerity, diligence and earnestness expecting only the pleasure of Allah SWT as well as doing good deeds based on noble morals is included in the scope of Ihsān as explained by the Prophet (PBUH) in the hadith of Jibril AS. To care for all creations of Allah SWT including humans, animals and plants is a form of worship and having Ihsān or compassion is of utmost important for inner awareness since the good done is because Allah SWT loves kindness and not for the purpose of pointing out to others.

Ihsān is able to generate a noble personality in every Muslim if implemented with honesty, namely the awareness that "Allah is All-Seeing" (Hadith Abu Hurairah RA).

According to a narration by Syaddad bin Aus RA, he said, the Prophet PBUH said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَتَبَ الإِحْسَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

> *"Verily Allah has prescribed Ihsān (proficiency, perfection) in all things." (Sahih Muslim, 1955).*

Islam teaches Muslims to treat animals as creatures to be cherished and loved. Mistreating any animal is regarded as a severe sin in Islam. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) appreciated and kind towards all animals. Prophet Muhammad was the embodiment of mercy. He showed compassion to all those around him including his family, orphans, friends, strangers and even enemies. He also treated the environment and animals with respect and mercy. He taught his followers that because animals were part of God's creation and they should be treated with dignity and due care.

Examples of punishment for mistreatment of cats can be found in a hadith,

> *"A woman was tormented because of a cat which she had confined until she died and she had to be admitted into Hell. She did not allow it either to eat or drink as it was confined, nor did she free it so that it might eat the insects of the earth"*
> *(Sahih Bukhari, Book 4, Hadith 13).*

A Muslim's kindness should extend not only to other people but also to animals, which are deserving of kind treatment and mercy. As Muslims, we must treat animals with kindness because Allah demands that we treat all animals with kindness and Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has warned us of severe consequences in the hereafter for mistreating animals.

> *"Those who are kind and considerate to Allah's creatures, Allah bestows His kindness and affection on them. Show kindness to the creatures on the earth so that Allah may be kind to you." (The Hadith - Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi).*

The traditions of Prophet Muhammad remind us that humankind was put on earth to be the custodian of God's creation. Treating animals with kindness and mercy is just one of the responsibilities embedded in that custodianship. Prophet Muhammad's words and behavior make it clear that causing defenseless creatures pain and suffering is not only completely unacceptable, but we will also be answerable to God for such actions.

Therefore, based on the premises above and the intention to help IIUM provide a sustainable and conducive environment in line with SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities), SDG 15 (Life on land) and SDG 17 (Partnership to achieve goals), and to serve a good cause and to be a blessing for all mankind, *rahmatan lil ʿālamīn*, a group of IIUM students and cat enthusiasts initiated a cat club called IIUM Abu Hurairah Club with the main objective of rescuing, treating and rehoming the abandoned cats and kittens to give them a second chance to live a better life. The name Abu Hurairah is adopted from one of our Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon Him) famous companions and a major narrator of his sayings. He was given the nickname Abu Hurairah (literally the father of Kittens) by the Prophet because he used to care for a small male cat (The Hadith - Tirmidhi, Book 3840)

Rationale Behind The Project

In tandem with our Universities' goal towards transformative learning and humanising education, one of the key factors is embedding compassion through humane education within our education system, which encourages cognitive, affective and behavioral growth through personal development of critical thinking, problem solving, perspective taking and empathy as it relates to people, animals, the planet and intersections among them. Humane education transcends quality education which highlights topics such as animal care and management, animal therapy, animal intelligence and ecological interdependence help to combat the global environmental crisis at its source, producing a better-informed populace equipped to enact responsible policies for a sustainable future. Quality humane education also fosters personal growth among the community and improved interpersonal relations. Notwithstanding, development will not be sustainable unless future citizens develop values and empathy and are willing to take action to make the world a better place. Humane education must be integrated into the curriculums at every academic level, from young childhood up through university. This is how the sustainability of ecosystem can be maintained.

Construction of the cat shelter

The Greater Gombak Animal Project

It is estimated that there are around 600 million cats living around the globe (Dauphiné and Cooper, 2009). In Malaysia, the issue of animal welfare especially animal cruelty often gets highlighted and attracts media attention. Stray and feral animals such as cats and dogs are contributing to the rise in population and spread of diseases. Lack of understanding of this crisis and lack of compassion towards animals evidently disturbs the ecosystem. Without proper management and education, awareness and responsibilities, we are left with problems such as spread of diseases among humans (Zoonotic diseases) and other cats such as feline leukemia, feline HIV, environmental contamination with urine and faeces, viral infections, injury and sickness due to territorial fights and abandoned newborn kittens. On Gombak campus alone, we have an estimation of 350-400 cats and kittens, mostly strays and abandoned with a range of health problems and infectious viruses.

With the fast-expanding rate of cat population, the idea of building a Transit Animal Shelter with the best facilities was brought forward with the design of a complex which would include a cattery, a small veterinary, an educational hall, an open catio for mental therapy activities and a cat café. In terms of cat management and control, Turkey is the best reference as its communities and municipalities have helped feed and care for all the cats and they also built little houses for felines to take shelter in during the cold season. One of the explanations behind Turks' reverence for cats is that they are considered ritually clean creatures in Islam and Prophet Muhammed expressed his fondness of animal in many hadith (the collected sayings of the prophet). The collaboration discussion between the Turkish Embassy and IIUM was featured in a local newspaper (BERNAMA, September 23, 2019). We want to replicate the cat management practice which is so successful in Turkey and bring it to the campus for others to follow.

We want to lead the way in showcasing a sustainable animal shelter that give the strays and feral cats and dogs a new life as well establishing a new curriculum in human education scope by instilling life skills among students."

The pitching attracted a potential funder, also a cat rescuer, Mr. Kenneth Lee, who decided to build a cat shelter on IIUM grounds as the first phase under the animal shelter for the abandoned stray cats on campus. This was agreed upon as the intended complex would need more than RM 1 million and that will take time. We would start small and take the initial step. A meeting which took place at Sejahtera Centre for Sustainability and Humanity was arranged with the objective of connecting the Office of the Deputy Rector (Student Development and Community Engagement), IIUM Abu Hurairah Club, and the Development Division (linking the physical development and soft development) to start a series of discussions and engagements. The outcome of the discussions was later presented to the top management of the University.

While this was in progress, the IIUM Abu Hurairah Club members and volunteers actively started organising awareness programmes and built partnerships and collaboration with stakeholders, Non-governmental organisations, animal clinics and individual animal activists to promote animal welfare, adoption programmes, fund raisings, training and community engagements. These were the preparations to create a momentum towards the construction of the shelter, its management, the knowledge and the responsibility that will come with it. Programmes such as the Catch-A-Cathon Adoption, Donation Programme, The Cat Day and several adoption-drives significantly boosted awareness among IIUM community in caring for the animals and actualised the spirit of volunteerism among the campus community.

The most impactful moment of showcasing awareness, compassion, handling skills and responsibility to care for animals among the students, staff and local community was portrayed during the early stage of the COVID-19 pandemic where many club members and volunteers who were stranded on campus played important roles in feeding, rescuing, fostering and rehabilitating the injured and sick cats and kittens. This clearly empowers the vision and objectives of the Animal Shelter project which is to inculcate humane education and sense of community responsibility among the campus population.

The public who was mostly from the followers of Abu Hurairah Club's social media and IIUM Student Union supporters also showed strong support through donation of money, cat food, medications as well as moral support to give rise to a number of volunteers pitching out in ensuring all cats and kittens are fed and safe throughout the pandemic.

Nonetheless, in between policies and procedures, different groups of community exist such as cat lovers' group with high compassion who would spend more for cats than for themselves. Some find this as a mental health cat therapy which works very well. There are also the "in between" communities which bring no harm but would rather take a backseat than to do any hands-on activities. Besides that, there is a part of the community which is uncomfortable with the existence of stray and feral cats in the environment which is perhaps due to trauma or allergies or level of noise and the amount of faeces and cat urine contaminating their living area. This was where the greatest challenge comes in where we have to accommodate to and convince certain related authorities for a suitable location where the construction, brainstorm on operational issues on maintenance, time as well as duration of the project, waste management, water source, building development regulations, electricity and conducive environment for a sustainable cat shelter.

Strategic Collaborations Between Stakeholders and Partners

To achieve an impactful outcome, the collaboration between stakeholders and establishment of partnership between various government bodies and private organisations took the center stage.

The first collaboration was with the Embassy of Turkey, Kuala Lumpur. An initial correspondence was established with the Counsellor of the Embassy via email, followed by a meeting between the Advisor of IIUMAHC and the Counsellor. Turkey is well known among predominately Muslim countries for honoring its cats, which are considered ritually clean animals in Islam. Animals that are vastly loved by its population include cats, dogs and birds. All animals, mainly cats, are taken care of by municipality and citizens. Everyone has the responsibility to feed and care for animals and they showed kindness and respect to all animals. This is what IIUMAHC would like to emulate at all our campuses. This collaboration will eventually spark bigger projects between IIUM and Turkey in the form of knowledge sharing, excursions, online webinars, introduction of new community engagement exchange programmes and new subjects in special skills.

The second partnership is our strong partnership with Maya Veterinary Clinic. The partnership with this veterinary clinic has been established long before the animal project started which was almost 11 years ago. Its strategic locations, pet-friendly clinic environment and well-versed veterinarians in their respective areas of expertise, Maya Veterinary Clinic has become a household name among the students and staff of the University. When the Animal Shelter project was started, a few initiatives were established including vaccination and discount vouchers for anyone who adopts any of the campus cats or kittens. Almost all of the injured and sick cats rescued on the campus are referred directly to this clinic for treatment.

Our reviews and success stories on cats treated and discharged from Maya Veterinary Clinic were put on our social media from time to time to help support the clinic in promoting their excellent services.

Next, as the main funder of the Cat Shelter, Mr. Kenneth Lee plays a key role in bridging the communities of pet lovers or pet owners as volunteers of the shelter. He is also an animal rescuer and has been appointed as one of the Advisors of the Animal Project. Mr. Kenneth Lee is also a semi-retired accountant and is the main designer of Animal Shelter. His passion as an animal activist has brought him to IIUM after reading an article about our intention to build a shelter in the local newspaper in 2019.

Our partnership was also established with Abu Hurairah Animal Society (AHAS) in 2019. AHAS is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) which promotes a caring Malaysian society through creating awareness and a balanced approach to animal welfare for the well-being of animals and mankind. The main objective of AHAS is to create awareness and responsibilities among the society on the importance of having compassion, kindness and respect for animals. During the course of this project, AHAS has assisted hugely in the distribution of cat food, medical supplies, transportation to and from the animal clinic, ward fees, medical fees and medicine for the sick and injured cats. With this invaluable assistance, the University management has agreed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between AHAS, Abu Hurairah Club and IIUM to work closely in the promotion and maintenance of the Animal Shelter, in the organisation of adoption drives, awareness talks, animal well-being workshops and seminars and invitation of volunteers from among the IIUM community and the public and in the assistance with sponsorship and collection of funds to run activities related to animal well-being.

Members of Abu Hurairah Club

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Maxim Moto Sdn Bhd is not only a cat food supplier and dealer, but it is also one of our stakeholders which will be collaborating with IIUMAHC in the adoption programmes, sharing knowledge on awareness about cat food and cat food donation. All cat food purchases are being done through this company. Maxim-motto is also one of our major sponsors for our cat poster competition and our Grand Mental Health Cat Video Competition.

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) is a non-profit organisation dedicated towards animal welfare in Malaysia. It is an ERA (education, rehabilitation and adoption) centre, which rescues, rehabilitates, spay and neuter and rehome stray dogs and cats. Once movement restrictions due to COVID-19 pandemic are lifted, a memorandum of Understanding will be signed to create linkages for further collaborations in the 'Stray-Free-Selangor' project headed by the royal Escort of the Sultan of Selangor. This project will attract more sponsorships in the spaying and neutering programmes. Even further, club members and volunteers will be trained in kennel cleaning, preparing and serving meals as well as grooming. SPCA will also help IUM manage the feral dogs issue.

With strong and trustworthy collaboration with the stakeholders and partners, the objectives and missions of the shelter can be realised.

The Establishment of Abu Hurairah Club

وَأَنفِقُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا۟ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى ٱلتَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ

"And do good. Truly, Allah loves the good-doers." (Al-Baqarah 2:195)

Abu Hurairah Club (IIUMAHC) was initially started in 2010 by a group of students who was concerned about the health conditions and overpopulation of stray cats around the campus. This club, which was unofficially established back then, has been actively engaged in providing assistance in various cases regarding animal welfare. Some of the most common contributions of this club are feeding the stray cats, dogs, civets and birds and rescuing injured, sick, old cats and new-born kittens by offering rehabilitation or sending them to animal clinics, supplying cat food and medical support, finding suitable adopters, organising awareness campaigns to care for the strays, providing trainings on wellness of cats and dogs to the task-force and providing information about domestic and wild animals.

These initiatives received the attention of the University and with the University's agenda of Humanising Education through Maqāṣiḍ and SDGs, AHC was formally established as one of the clubs in 2019 and placed under the care of Sejahtera Centre for Sustainability and Humanity which is the Secretariat of RCE Greater Gombak.

The main vision of IIUM AHC is to build a community responsible for all creatures including animals in and around the IIUM Gombak campus to create a compassionate environment where all animals are treated with kindness and respect.

In all religions, kindness to animals is an exalted virtue. Animals are created by Allah SWT to complete human life. In this life, animals too have feelings. The only difference between humans and animals is that the latter do not possess minds like humans who are created to be the caliphs of Allah SWT on earth.

The main missions of the club include:
- To create a caring and kind community that encourages fair and humane treatment of all creatures.
- To sustain a clean and conducive environment for both work and study.
- To engage communities and like-minded organisations in achieving lasting solutions to pressing animal welfare challengers that will benefit both animals and people through programmes and student activities.
- To promote holistic education where one's identity, meaning, and purpose of life is connected to the community, the natural world, and to humanitarian values such as showing compassion and peace towards animals.

IIUM Abu Hurairah Club objectives are:
- T*o facilitate the rehabilitation and rehoming* of homeless and abandoned cats and kittens on IIUM Gombak Campus.
- *To promote the neutering and spaying of cats in order to reduce the population and risks of diseases* and sustain a clean and hygienic environment for work and study in accordance with the Rescue-Neuter-Rehome (RNR) procedure.
- *To educate the staff and students on the importance of showing compassion towards animals* and understanding the needs and ways to save and handle them.
- *To raise awareness on the responsibilities that come with cat ownership* under the Animal Welfare Act 2015.
- *To foster links with NGOs, Animal Shelters and independent rescuers for support*, information, advice, fundraising and awareness campaigns.

- To provide a platform for students to show compassion for animals by volunteering in animal-related humanitarian activities.
- To offer avenue for the treatment of depression, stress and anxiety among the students through cat bonding therapy.
- To inculcate the awareness on the Sunnah of our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) where animals, especially cats, should be treated with kindness and compassion for they too have the rights in this world.

Volunteers helping to decorate the shelter

Coping with Challenges

Some of the challenges faced by the club include insufficient funds to build an extension of the existing shelter. With an estimation of 350-400 stray and feral cats on campus, approximately 15-20 feral dogs and large troops of monkeys, a larger complex is definitely needed to cater the different species of animals and their different needs. Apart from that, lack of rehabilitation rooms for new mothers and lactating kittens, sick and injured cats and the newly vaccinated cats and kittens are also a big challenge for the club members. Rehabilitation rooms are very important for safety as well as for providing a stress-free and clean environment for the said cases. As for now, the three compartments in the small cat shelter can only hold healthy rescued cats and kittens. Another major challenge is the assistance or volunteerism among the staff and students especially during COVID-19 pandemic.

With very few students who remained on campus and restrictions among the staff to enter the campus, many programmes related to rescue, feeding and adoption have to be put on hold. Provision of food and medication is also a part of the challenges the club has to endure where weekly estimation cost for food alone is around RM 2000.

Medication which can be administered by students such as cream for eye infections, flea medication, oral worm medication, wound lotion and eye drops need to be stocked up for the many cases we receive daily. One of the biggest challenges is a lack of public awareness, both in handling their pets to prevent overpopulation and in placing animals in good homes. Not everyone is willing to adopt a stray cat or kitten as the maintenance cost is rather high. Thus, we can still see an increasing number of abandoned cats.

Abu Hurairah Club

The Project's Contribution to The Whole Community Transformation

With the IIUM Agenda Reorienting Education towards Sustainable Development in place, the introduction of a University Required Course on 'Sustainability: Issues, Principles and Practices', which has been started at all Kulliyyah (faculties) this new semester, opens up ways for Greater Gombak Cat Shelter to become one of the living labs integrating Sustainable Development in the curriculum. This agenda will provide opportunities to more than 2000 students per semester to be engaged in projects that could bring Greater Gombak Shelter and other RCE Greater Gombak projects within the campus vicinity. Two new courses on Community Engagement are also underway which will directly link to the surrounding local and international communities through programmes and projects conducted by students and staff.

Community engagement and stakeholder participation is needed to understand the community's motivations for keeping cats or if they want to continue to have cats and whether there is a presence of any cultural lore or practices that could hinder or strengthen a management programme. Stakeholder participation can embrace diverse knowledge and values from all individual stakeholders by engaging them in the decision making.

Projects related to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) will bridge the Kulliyyah of Engineering (KOE), Kulliyyah of Education (KOED) and Kulliyyah of Architecture and Environmental Design (KAED) for Responsible Research. Students' final year projects such as the extension and improvement of solar panel, the Rain Water Harvesting System and the automotive projects to turn a car as cat ambulance or as an "ambassador" on wheels to ferry the cats to the animal clinics and installation of microchips for tagging purposes for the campus cats will be under the economic sustainability aspect. In addition, the therapeutic gardens for cat therapy provides an approach towards sustainable healthcare which directly falls under social impact.

Sustainable management of cat urine and faeces will be directly linked to the environmental aspect of the SDG. Finally, living skills in animal management and training for future jobs and business endeavors (pet-hotel or pet-fostering) ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, supporting the economic and social aspect of the SDGs.

Achievement and Challenges

One of the main outputs is the construction of the Greater Gombak Animal Shelter which has been completed successfully. The cat shelter is the first phase of the Animal Shelter Project. It stands at 8 ft. in height, 22 ft. in width and 22 ft. in width and has three 6x3 ft. compartments. It is able to hold approximately 60-70 cats at one time. A pilot study is being carried out with four cats residing in one of the compartments. During the recent community engagement programme, the cat shelter received a nice new coating, a raised platform and *Do-It-Yourself (DIY)* cat houses created out of recycled boxes.

Apart from that, affiliations have been started with the Turkish Embassy, Kuala Lumpur, Society For The Prevention of Cruelty To Animals (SPCA Malaysia), our Alumni, Abu Hurairah Animal Society (AHAS), Kulliyyah of Engineering, Kulliyyah of Education and Kulliyyah of Architecture to establish linkages to develop strategies and programmes to promote animal welfare and generate awareness and responsibility among campus and local community. The project also managed to raise RM25,000 in funds for stray cats from staff, students, local community and the public for the purchase of cat food, medicine, medical bills and pet supplies.

From the two Rescue-Neuter-Rehome (RNR) programmes carried out throughout the project duration, 89 cats and kittens were successfully adopted with the help of our partners and social media followers, 50 were successfully vaccinated, neutered and released back on campus and 39 injured and sick cats and kittens were sent to the Veterinary clinic for treatment.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, 159 DIY Cat-Feeders were made by the club members and volunteers and distributed to 70 designated feeding stations around the campus and the student residence.

Conclusion

The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

<div dir="rtl">

مَنْ يُحْرَمْ الرِّفْقَ يُحْرَمْ الْخَيْرَ

</div>

"He who is deprived of kindness is deprived of goodness"
(The Hadith - Sahih Muslim, Book 2592).

Ensuring the wellbeing of strays is everyone's responsibility. Stray cats constitute an integral part of many urban ecosystems worldwide. Their presence results from uninterrupted natural reproduction, abandonment by pet owners and abundant food resources. If not managed well, these cats present controversial and emotional issues regarding management of their high densities, hygienic and epidemiological risks to humans and predation of wildlife. With neutering high cost and vaccination fees, overly populated and lack of strict law enforcement for abuse cases, well-structured Rescue-Neuter-Rehome (RNR) management needs to be implemented for a sustainable living for both humans and animals. Humankind must strike a balance in their treatment of animals. All living creatures were put on this earth by God for our benefit. They are not at the same level as human beings, but they should not be treated cruelly.

It is humankind's responsibility to see that they have food, water and shelter from the elements. Living creatures must not be overburdened, abused or tortured and doing so will surely result in God's just punishment. A true believer in God demonstrates his or her belief by respecting the entire creation and Prophet Muhammad's character and actions are a shining example of respect for all that exists.

RCE Recognition Award
2020

Acknowledged Flagship Project

RCE Greater Gombak

Greater Gombak Animal Shelter Project
This certificate is awarded to RCE Greater Gombak for its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goal 15: Life on Land

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY

Akio Takemoto
Programme Head, UNU-IAS

9

Mainstreaming Education for Sustainable Development as Foundation for RCE Greater Gombak Community through Sejahtera Academic Framework: The Case of UNGS 1201

By Zainal Abidin Sanusi

Introduction

Universities' formal curriculum are getting more complex and diverse as the world's issues are getting more complicated and interconnected. In response to this demand, some subjects have turned to be very specific and technical that they have neglected the true purpose of knowledge for the society. In some cases, the subjects are very commercially driven with minimal attention given to the values that need to be inculcated through the subjects. In preparing students to be an agent of change towards a sustainable society, reorientation of existing education especially its course content and pedagogy is needed to humanise the curriculum so that it can bring back the original purpose of universities and education itself.

At the same time, while the formal education is being too technical-oriented, the informal curriculum is expected to serve as a platform to complement the core disciplinary subjects in inculcating the expected soft skills. However, these co-curriculum activities are somehow structured and executed with loose institutional support rendering the activities to be not as impactful as it is supposed to be. The set of skills needed beyond technical competencies such as systematic thinking, transdisciplinary cognitive skills, leadership and communication skills are becoming more critical than the cognitive and technical skills. Hence, some observe that these co-curricular should be the core of education, taking the central focus as formal education, not as the secondary level of learning, as to how it is administered now.

In addressing this need for reorientation and transformation of education, IIUM has introduced Sejahtera Academic Framework (SAF) to "enable the graduate not just to manage or adapt, but to lead the way – foreseeing the incoming disruptions, coming up with our own innovative solutions, while maintaining true to our vision and mission, especially in serving Allah and bringing good to the world (Rahmatan lil Alamin – in short, in educating the current students "now" to face the future, regardless of what the future might be" (International Islamic University Malaysia, 2021).

This reorientation and transformation of formal and non-formal education is one of the most important components and processes in RCE activities. In fact, it is the foundation that determines the success of any RCE without which the individual change needed to lead to community and whole societal change will not take place.

It is based on the spirit that a new course UNGS 1201: Sustainable Development: Issues, Policies and Practices, is introduced as a new compulsory course to all new students to be registered in the first year of their enrolment into IIUM. These students are the ones who will become the agent of change in the Greater Gombak Community through various community projects as part of the course requirements. The communities need all possible support from the university to address the challenges especially to deliver Sustainable Development (SD) awareness programs and possible specific projects for identified issues. With a student body population of more than 10000 undergraduates, IIUM is in the position to transform the students into agents of change for sustainable development. Changing their mind-set and giving them the skills and encouraging behaviors and initiatives towards SD will not only affect these students, but it will have long-term impact as they graduate and become leaders of their communities. Through this approach, not only the students will have the opportunity to learn real life skills needed, but the community will be benefited directly from the presence of a university in the vicinity with an ultimate agenda of making RCE Greater Gombak as a 'communiversity'.

UNGS 1201 – Sejahtera Academic Framework in Action

Reorientation of higher education for sustainable development calls for deliberative and dynamic curriculum renewal. There are many good practices available all over the world for anyone to emulate or learn from. To name a few, there are alliances of University Leaders for Sustainable Future (ULSF), Higher Education Partnership for Sustainability Program (HEPS), Association for Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) and Higher Education Associations Sustainability Consortium (HEASC) which are actively advocating for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). These groups of universities have introduced myriads of course offerings and case studies for reorienting or integrating sustainability into their university's curriculum. One thing that is found common among them is high level of local content and action-based approach. Contextualisation is observed as the main criteria for a successful and impactful curriculum either formal or non-formal ones.

Learning from their experiences, Sejahtera Academic Framework is developed as IIUM and Malaysian version of contextualising university education for sustainable development. The main idea of SAF is to provide a learning ecosystem at every level and aspect of students' stay in the campus so that they will be able to connect and give meaning to the information imparted in the classrooms with their other activities outside the classroom. To further localise the learning, if other universities put general sustainability as the main framework, SAF pushes for a local concept of living – Sejahtera – as its foundation. Sejahtera is a concept of living based on the premise that wellbeing, happiness, tranquility, peace and all related qualities of life is all connected and must begin with the person himself. Each individual needs to have these qualities within themselves first before they can disseminate the same qualities to others. As such, all courses and activities including the surrounding must be conducive towards the Sejahtera concept. This process is now intensively taking place in IIUM and extended to its community engagement activities with society beyond campus. Figure below illustrates how learning should be connected for students within the campus and outside the campus for their community engagement programs.

THE *SEJAHTERA* ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES
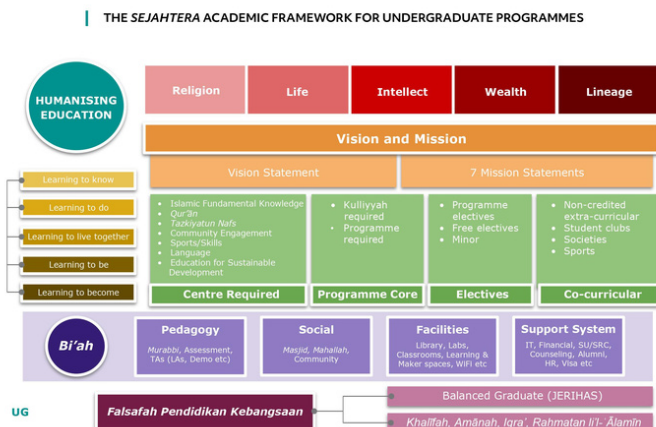
As illustrated above, the course UNGS 1201 falls together with other UniCORE courses (marked as number 4 in the above Figure). The idea of SAF, as mentioned above, although it is just one of the many compulsory courses offered, it must have the connection and synergy with all other processes and activities and more importantly, it should serve as a reflective platform for all other educational activities in the campus.

UNGS 1201 is structured together with other 2 courses - Usrah in Action I – whereby students are to identify and profile the community to engage with for their SD project.

Before going to the ground to do the profiling process, students will be taught the fundamental knowledge on community engagement. They will also be exposed to values and skills that are necessary in getting into the society in the context of identifying sustainable development issues in the community.

At the same time, being a Muslim student, they must equip themselves first with knowledge on *fardhu kifayah* (collective responsibility as Muslim) which include among others being an Imam for congregational prayers, management of gathering in Islamic way and other common traditions among Malay, Chinese and Indian. These knowledge and skills are important to create good rapport with the community and also part and parcel of Sejahtera communal culture and traditions. The last and finale of this series of education for sustainable development is Usrah in Action II - whereby the student are tasked and must be ready to implement the actual SD project identified during the Usrah in Action I. Here is the culmination of the process of preparing them to be the real agent of change by putting into action the knowledge they acquired in UNGS 1201 and to face the real-life challenge of the execution of community project for empowering the society towards sustainable development.

Specifically, the UNGS 1201 course intends to increase students' knowledge on the concept of sustainability, develop the right attitudes, values and skills in addressing sustainable development issues and related challenges encountered in a globalized world. More specifically, this course aims to demonstrate the importance of sustainable development's principles and practices which include the Islamic perspective on Sustainable Development. Through multiple case studies, students are expected to understand the challenges and barriers in integrating sustainable development at local, national, and international levels. The course has three (3) learning outcomes namely;

- Demonstrate the understanding and awareness of different concepts of sustainable development and the importance to balance the perspective on economy, social, and environment and integrate Islamic dimensions to the perspective.
- Collaboratively play the roles of member society to analyse challenges encountered by different societies in various development issues such as healthcare, education, social security, gaps between economic prosperity, and environmental degradation.

- To work together as a member of society to develop alternative and creative solutions to address the issues of sustainable development on campus community.

Therefore, collectively, all the three courses - UNGS 1201 and Usrah in Action I and II intend to provide a base towards the development of leaders of the community, as aligned with IIUM philosophy. The courses hopefully will activate the student's heads-on, hands-on and hearts-on even during their university time and they are fully prepared to become an active member of a community once graduated. Therefore, it is hoped that the 3 subjects will prepare IIUM students not only to become a better member of society, but to also help establish strong relation between IIUM and Greater Gombak Community as foundation for RCE Greater Gombak. A course on education for sustainable development like UNGS 1201 at the beginning of university life serves as a very critical molding platform to reorient the students towards sustainability.

UNGS 1201 as Showcase for Transformative Education for Sustainable Development

Education for sustainable development requires detailed planning and continuous improvement and engagement with all stakeholders especially the course instructor themselves since it is an ongoing process to maintain the relevance of the course. In the case of UNGS 1201, it started in the first semester of 2020 with almost 2000 students involving 60 course instructors. The instructors have volunteered themselves to be part of the teaching team – which is a very good value and sign of sustainability of the course itself as volunteerism is an important component of sustainable development.

After completion of the subject in one Semester, an assessment and evaluation on the course was carried out to analyse its achievement against the course learning outcomes.

In general, based on documented assessment tools, the course has achieved its outlined objectives despite being a newly introduced course. There are five (5) unique features of the course that have contributed to make it transformative, deliberative and dynamic curriculum:

- **Transdisciplinary and integrated**
  The course has achieved its objective of offering a transdisciplinary perspective on sustainable development issues, which is the most important criteria, by having a multidisciplinary teaching team who represents all kuliyyah (faculties) in the university. Their presence in the team ensures that no one single discipline perspective predominates the curriculum. At the same time, another unique feature, which is an achievement too, is that students in each classroom, in almost all sections, are deliberately arranged to come from different kuliyyah if not from varying departments or specialisation. This scenario allows contestation of perspectives among them in debating about sustainable development issues – which is another prerequisite for a successful education for sustainable development subject. This aspect of being transdisciplinary and integrated is very significant since problems and issues in the real world have no one single discipline solution.

- **Formative and Summative Assessment**
  Most university courses are either formative or summative in their assessment especially in those courses where there is a professional bodies accreditation required. Many universities are having strict processes and procedures when it comes to assessment tools that it jeopardises or hinders the desired learning outcomes in the pretext of quality assurance using a conventional definition of learning. Issues of sustainable development require a totally different approach, hence different assessment systems. Therefore, UNGS 1201, is designed to have both formative and summative without final examination which usually become burdensome and in many cases, the only time students put very serious attention, focus, and effort in trying to understand the course. UNGS 1201 assessments are spread through the semester via quizzes, online questions, reflective journals/blogs, and team project proposals.

- **Research-based**
  As a part of the university scholastic community, students must be trained and exposed to the university research culture. Identification of issue for the project proposal was carried out through proper research methodology and empirical process. Although students are in their first year and first semester, they must be inculcated with such culture to ensure it becomes part of their scholastic personality.

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- **Community-engaged**

  Education for sustainable development in essence is community engagement. As such, this UNGS 1201 course inevitably is a community-driven course whereby actual engagement with the community is part and parcel of the course, not just as a project requirement. Through direct engagement with the community, the students can directly appreciate what they have been exposed to in the classroom and vice versa, they can also bring back what they found in the community to be deliberated in the classroom. Such a process will testify the truth and practicality of the information or knowledge acquired. Concurrently, via this direct engagement with the community, students' soft skills will be put into test and further harnessed.

- **Action and solution-oriented**

  The course is not a theoretical course. Half of the assessment tool is assigned to the development of project proposals to emphasise the importance of actions and solutions in approaching sustainable development issues. Hence, discourse and debate are naturally skewed and geared towards searching for solutions, not just mere pieces of information which they can acquire anywhere given the ICT advancement now. The challenge of education sustainable development lies in the detailed action and implementation process. Hence, UNGS 1201 is structured in such a way that students are trained to approach the issue from a problem-solving perspective.

As evident to the above achievements, at the end of last semester, the course has garnered at least 300 projects proposals that address a wide range of sustainability issues inside and outside the campus. These proposals are definitely very useful databases for university management in the realisation of IIUM as a sustainable campus. The students have also published at least 20 newspaper articles in the newspaper voicing their concerns on the state of various SDG-related issues in the countries. There are also hundreds of blogs and individual journals written by the students as part of their educational and motivational reflection while going through the course.

UNGS 1201 as Participatory and Active Platform for SDGs and IIUM Missions

IIUM has outlined seven mission statements which are very beautifully and intellectually crafted as a noble aspiration of an international and Islamic university. The mission statement, although it was drafted in 1995, has specifically mentioned the need to address and prepare the university and its community for sustainable development issues. Therefore, it is not an overstatement to claim that IIUM has been way ahead in identifying the importance of SDG when other universities are yet to recognise it in their vision and mission. However, the reference to sustainable development was not having strong emphasis until the recent intensive call for universities to respond to SDGs.

Given the current strategies of IIUM to humanise education through *Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* and sustainable development, it is very timely and appropriate that there is a specific course offered to serve the purpose of exposing the students to this subject matter. Hence, UNGS 1201 has been mandated to carry out the task and at the same time complement nicely and significantly to the existing courses in providing not only the fundamental knowledge of Islam, but more importantly to give meaning and put action into them. As a course about and for SD, UNGS 1201 is serving all the SDGs but specifically, it is a major platform for delivering and implementing SDG 4 – Quality Education and SDG 17 – Partnership for Goals. This UNGS 1201 project also touches all the 5Ps of SDG – People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership.

In the context of fulfilling IIUM missions, as mentioned above, UNGS is a direct platform to prepare students for mission number 6 that is - "to enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilisation dialogues in Malaysia as well as across communities and nations" and also mission number 7 that is - "to develop an environment that instills commitment for life-long learning and a deep sense of social responsibility among staff and students". With UNGS 1201 clearly serving both sustainable development goals and at least three of the seven missions concurrently, the course has the best potential to be a very critical platform of learning and action that combines both Islamic input and other perspectives in one single course.

From governance perspectives, UNGS 1201 serves as a strategic platform that brings together all players in the university and also from the external community. For example, UNGS 1201 has gathered a group of community practitioners among the lecturers who, despite not being expert in the subject, have volunteered themselves to be in the teaching team of the course. It has organically broken the disciplinary silos that have been hindering many attempts before to bring together different kulliyyah to work on various projects which require an integrated approach.

Furthermore, once the projects are ready to be implemented, it will then bring together different administrative departments to work together given the transdisciplinary nature of sustainable development issues. For this purpose, there are at least five key cross cutting activities streams involved:

- Governance and management
- Operation and facilities
- Human resources and culture
- Marketing and communication
- Partnership and stakeholder engagement.

For an effective and impactful Education for Sustainable Development programs, it requires an ecosystem that will provide a seamless learning experience. Thus, changes in content of the curriculum alone are not sufficient if not followed by structural transformation of the support system. This includes support from members of the university - from the top management to the policy makers, and the academics is vital. Through such process, the whole IIUM institution is pushed towards a transformation process which ultimately hoped to bring in the change needed to become a sustainable university.

Conclusion

In conclusion, UNGS 1201 has the biggest potential to serve as the bridge between IIUM whole institution transformation (WIT) and RCE Greater Gombak whole community transformation (WCT) process. IIUM envisions to showcase itself as a sustainable university with Islam as its strongest foundation and serving the whole community regardless of religion or ethnic backgrounds. In this transition process, it is very important that all aspects in the three main functions of a university - teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community engagement - are all geared towards the same objective. In such process, there is a need to have at least one platform to carry out the message and more importantly, to translate the agenda into practices and actions. UNGS 1201, as described above, with its five (5) unique features, fit this purpose well. Although, undeniably, coordinating and managing such a big number of students is definitely a big challenge and daunting task that requires full ecosystem support, but with full commitment and support from the top management and high-level of volunteerism spirit from bottom up, the project has completed its first phase and progressing well for the second phase of full community engagement. UNGS 1201 has already triggered significant steps towards transformation for sustainable universities, there will always be challenges that need to be addressed and given the highest priority to ensure optimal impact of the project. With the spirit of sustainability and partnership for goals (SDG 17), IIUM will propel to be an Islamic and international sustainable university.

If all the trees on earth were pens and the ocean ⸢were ink⸣, refilled by seven other oceans, the Words of Allah would not be exhausted. Surely Allah is Almighty, All-Wise.

LUQMAN 31:27

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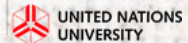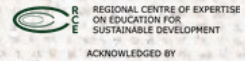
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