

CONTRIBUTION OF NGO'S IN FIGHTING AGAINST POVERTY

Prof Datuk Dr Denison Jayasooria
Malaysian CSO SDG Alliance, APPGM-SDG
Secretariat & KITA-UKM

17/6/2021



INTRODUCTION



Thank EPU & Jeffrey Sachs Centre on Sustainable Development for this invitation.



CSO- Civil Society Organisations.



NGO- Non governmental organisations.



the culture of voluntarism intrinsic to Malaysian society such as 'gotong royong'.

My Presentation addresses five key questions on CSOs/NGOs in addressing poverty:



What is the potential?



What is the role?



What examples?



What challenges?



What way forward?

WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL OF CSO/NGO?

LEGAL REGISTRATION & NETWORKS

- There are 114,610 organisations registered under 6 different legal provisions.
- ROS-Societies Act, Companies Act, Trustees, Rukun Tetangga Act, ROY-Youth Act & Cooperative society.
- These organisations have about 10.9 million members.
- There are religious organisations
- There are also Social Enterprises.
- There are online communities or networks which are not registered but dynamic.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

- Voluntarily driven by motivated individuals, families & communities
- Small in size and structure. Therefore there is less bureaucracy & easy mobility.
- Relational- personal & hand holding in approach
- Reaching the most vulnerable communities & interior
- A Face to poverty not just statistics or numerical data
- Approach would be multi dimensional and not a silo approach

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF NGOs IN ADDRESSING POVERTY?

COVID-19 CRISIS & COMMUNITY RESPONSE



- Civil society organisations responded swiftly to calls for help
- Volunteers to Ministry of Health
- Leveraging technology for crowd funding
- Food distribution & cash handouts

NEW INITIATIVES



- KitaJagaKita – network of 34 grassroots community organisations
- Open Source Community Fights against COVID-19
- KitaBantu Kita –assisting 3,682 families

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF NGOs IN ADDRESSING POVERTY?

COVID 19 & EFFECTIVE COORDINATION



- A coordination platform- MATCH (Malaysian COVID 19 coordination & Action Hub)- GLCs, Government & CSO
- Multi-stakeholder partnerships in aid response
- Co chaired by Malaysian Red Crescent Society & Yayasan Hasanah. Mercy Malaysia also involved

FROM RELIEF TO DEVELOPMENT



- Welfare to SDGs - a shift from hand outs to long term development*
- Early response was relief work (food & cash handout)
 - A shift towards income generation & livelihood.
 - Mercy Malaysia – Building Resilient Communities (BRC)
 - Yayasan Hasanah funding for community development work

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF NGOs IN ADDRESSING POVERTY?

COVID 19 & PUBLIC ADVOCACY



→ CSOs in the forefront of advocating and calling for greater public intervention & policy change

→ Role of activist, journalist public intellectuals in articulating critical concerns such as social protection, neglect of vulnerable groups (like migrant workers, undocumented & refugees), poverty measurement & effective delivery

ADVOCACY INITIATIVES



→ **North South Initiative (NSI)**, an advocacy group on migrant workers in Malaysia amid the COVID-19 pandemic

→ **International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)**- addressing gender based violence

→ **Geutanyoe Foundation & Rohingya Working Group**

WHAT EXAMPLES (COVID-19 & SDGs?)



The establishment of the All Party Parliamentary Group on SDGs (APPGM-SDG) by Parliament in Oct 2019. This is a bipartisan group of MPs from government party and opposition.



Ministry of Finance allocated RM 2million for the localising SDGs in 10 parliamentary locations as a pilot project in 2020



CSOs led by the Malaysian CSO SDG Alliance undertook field visits, grounded research and identified 34 community projects



APPGM-SDG - 10 Locations (2020 Pilot Phase)



Pendang
Land ownership and agriculture



Jeli
Smallholder dependency

No two places are the same and issues are highly contextual!



Papar
Development Impact on Agricultural Community



Selayang
Migrant and Refugee



Bentong
Sustainable Agriculture in semi-urban

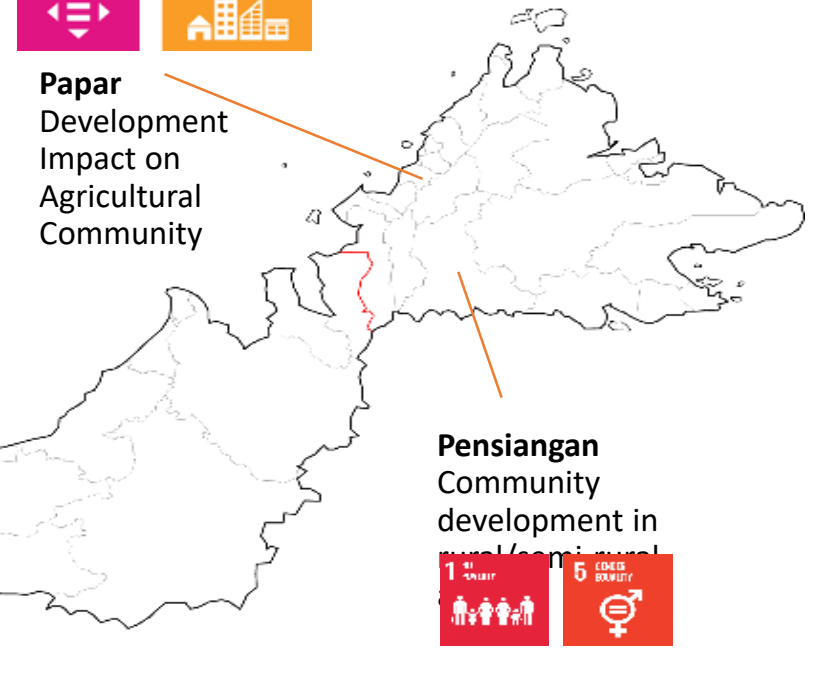


Kuching
Squatters in Urban Area



Petaling Jaya
Urban Poverty in urban area (sustainable Cities)

Tanjung Piai
Sustainable Tourism in Coastal Area



Pensiangan
Community development in rural/semi-rural



Batang Sadong
Connectivity in semi-rural area



APPGM-SDG - An Example of SDG Innovation

From the field work in localising SDGs in 2020 at 10 parliamentary locations:-

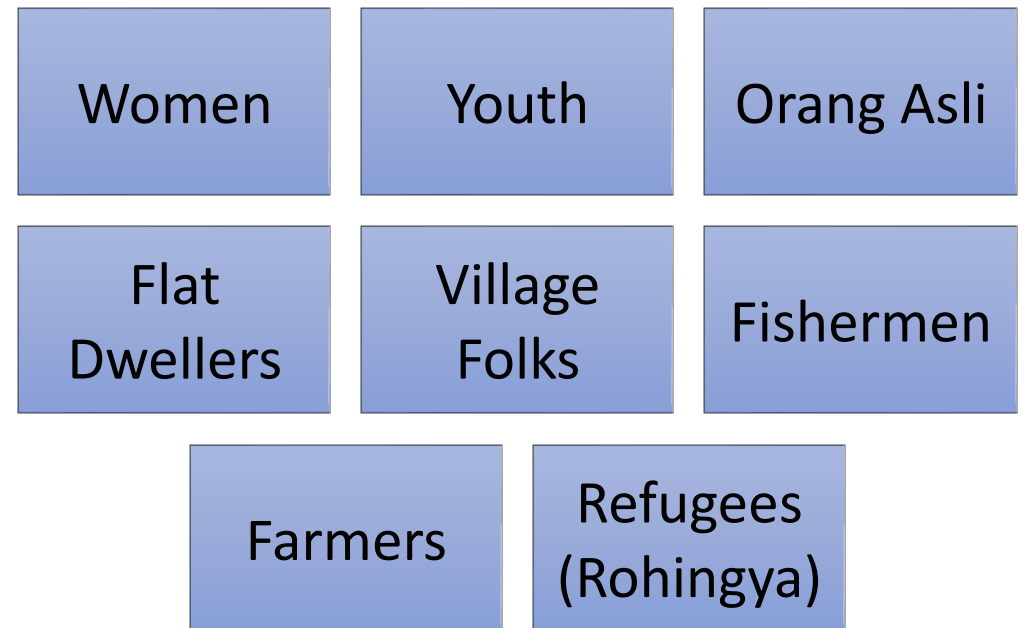


We undertook 34 SDG solution projects reaching over 1,162 participants

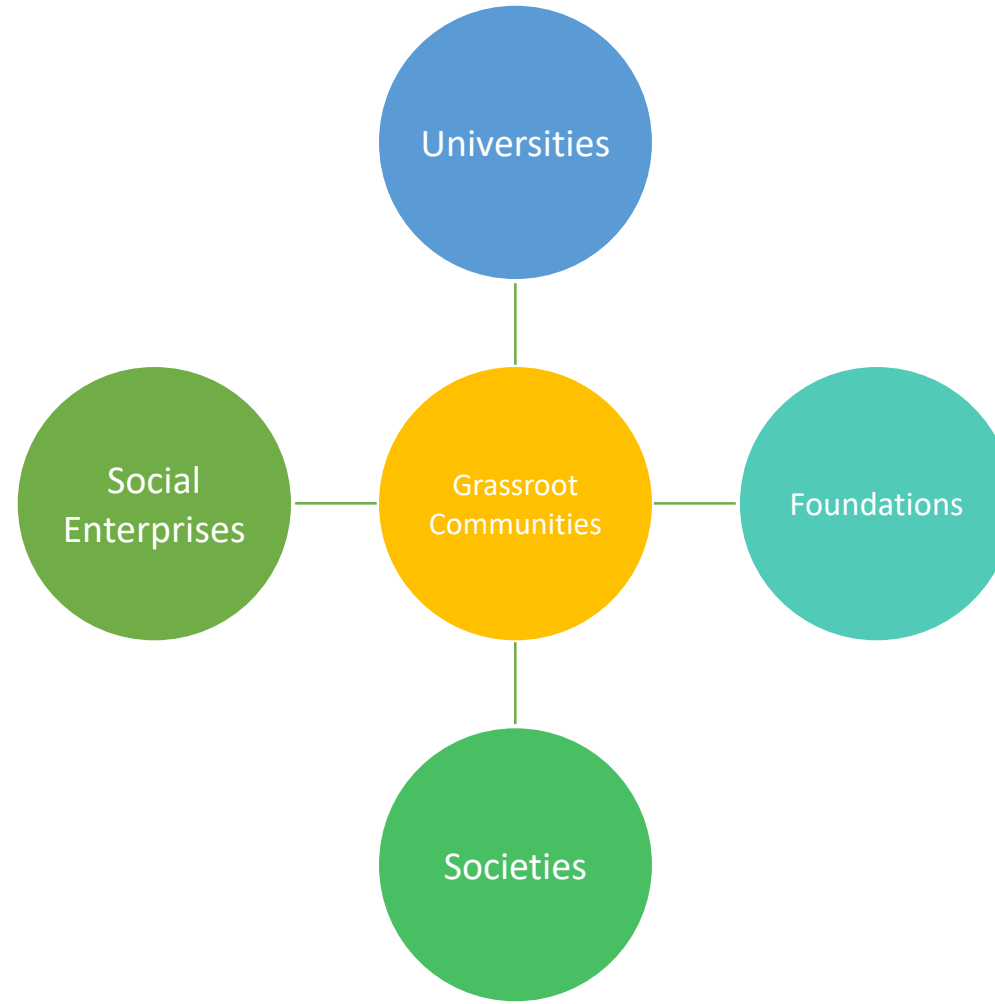


The reality & visibility of poverty, low income & inequality :- poor communities at the ground both at rural & urban areas

Target Group: 8 VULNERABLE GROUPS



APPGM-SDG - Category of Organisations



APPGM-SDG - Example of Case Studies

BASIC MALAY LANGUAGE CLASSES FOR REFUGEES



15 participants both Men and Women from Selayang Baru, Selangor



Learnt basic communication, numbers and about Malaysia as a multi racial country and linguistic



At the end of the course, participants were able to converse and understand basic BM

APPGM-SDG - Example of Case Studies

MUSHROOM PROJECT FOR ORANG ASLI YOUTHS

- 5 Orang Asli Youths from Kampung Sungai Rual, Jeli
- 5 months Mushroom project training
- 4 harvesting period took place since the training begin and has generated sustainable income for the participants

APPGM-SDG - Example of Case Studies

PPR DESA MENTARI & URBAN SOLUTIONS



Urban poverty & deprivation issues



A women entrepreneurship development project



A community Kitchen and a bakery has been set up with 10 entrepreneurs



This sustainable model can be replicated in other B40 communities

WHAT CHALLENGES?

VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

- Complex nature of poverty especially urban poverty & deprivation
- Multi dimensional nature of poverty & cross cutting nature requires a team & partnership effort (government, CSO & Private sector)
- Working with different target groups require a good understanding of the group
- Lack savings
- No social protection especially informal sector
- Break down of social support & social control systems in the neighbourhood especially in urban poor locations



WHAT CHALLENGES?

SERVICE DELIVERY NGOs

- ↳ NGOs short term projects due to funding or lack of funding
- ↳ Volunteer base- many NGOs lack professional full time staff
- ↳ Lack of coordinated data collection to ascertain public funds collected, socio-economic & service delivery
- ↳ Lack of institutional mechanism for collaboration, networking and joint action especially at district and local government levels
- ↳ Lack of public policies to monitor quality and professional delivery
- ↳ Lack of training & professional development of social sector workforce – social work, community work



WHAT WAY FORWARD?

- ↳ Tap the potential of self help, self reliance rather than handouts
- ↳ Build social & community enterprises like community forestry & cooperative-grassroots empowerment strategy
- ↳ Adopt stronger decentralised approach at district and local authority levels
- ↳ Establish multi stakeholder groups at the district and local government levels
- ↳ Establish an NGO coordination mechanism in addressing poverty & community work for rural & urban locations
- ↳ Ensure capacity building & funding for CSO- Government could contract out programs especially in reaching vulnerable
- ↳ Consolidate data collection & impact assessment

CONCLUSION



We can see how valuable the CSO and community groups have been in complementing the role of the government not just during the COVID crisis but as development partners at the grassroots.



We need to unleash this movement of local actors for nation building & in addressing poverty especially among the most vulnerable sections in Malaysian society





THANKYOU