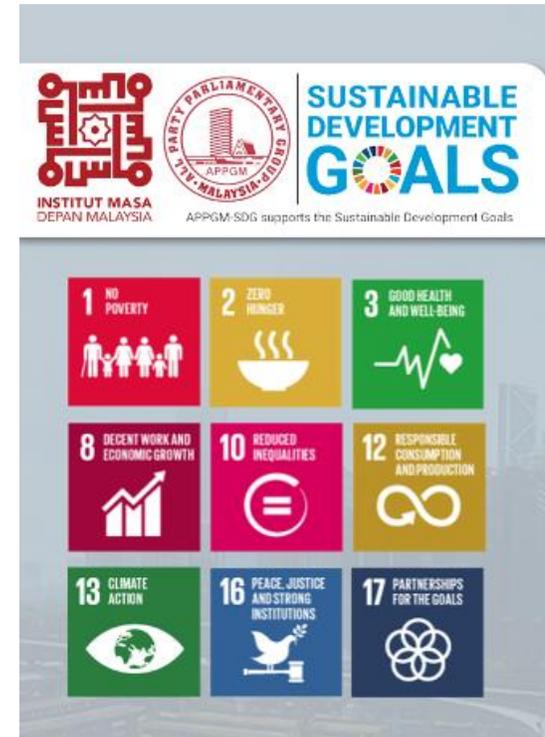
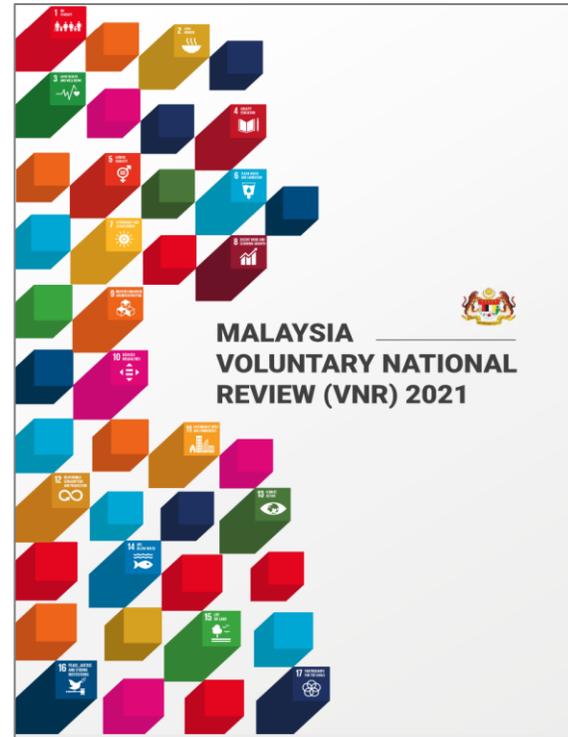




INSTITUT MASA
DEPAN MALAYSIA

PEMACU
INTELEK



PROGRAMME REPORT

Title	Focus Group Discussion - Consultation on Malaysia's Second Voluntary National Review Report 2021 on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Implementation Progress
Date	22 nd & 23 rd July 2021, Thursday & Friday (9.00 AM – 1.00 PM)
Platform	Zoom Application
In Collaboration	All-party Parliamentary Group Malaysia On Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG), Malaysian CSO Alliance, EPU, UN Malaysia Country Team

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 - Appendix D – Article Release

Program Information

Item	Description
Program Title	Consultation on Malaysia's Second Voluntary National Review Report 2021 on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Implementation Progress
Background	<p>Through 6 to 16 July 2021, the United Nations meets online for the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). During this event, member states present its Voluntary National Review (VNR) and discuss the implementation progress of the Agenda 2030 on SDGs.</p> <p>The government of Malaysia presented the VNR report on 15 July 2021 (Thursday) between 9.00pm to 1.00am (Malaysia time). For the preparation of the report, there has been a consultative process with all the relevant agencies and civil society organisations.</p> <p>This session will further serve as a platform for the government, civil society members, and the private sector to review the progress Malaysia has made over the years on SDGs. It aims to provide policy direction for the future, keeping in mind the goals of the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 (SPV 2030) and the 12th Malaysian Plan (2021-2025).</p>
Program Objective	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide a platform for the government, civil society and private sector opportunity to understand, review and comment on the process Malaysia has taken on the SDG implementation. 2. To enhance community interest and participation in the localising of the SDGs especially at the district and local authority levels in Malaysia. 3. To make strategic recommendations for the effective enhancement of the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 (SPV2030) and the 12th Malaysia Plan (2021- 2025) with the SDG agenda of leaving no one behind.
Organising institutions	This online consultation is co-organised by Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (MASA) and the All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) in partnership with the Economic Planning Unit (EPU), the Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance and the UN Malaysia Country Team.

Program Information (cont'd)

Item	Description
Platform	Zoom Application
Date	22 nd & 23 rd July 2021
Time	9.00 AM – 1.00 PM
Participants Profile	Government, Parliamentarian, Academia, Professionals, Corporate Leaders, Think Tanks, Subject Matter Experts, Civil Servants, Civil Society Organizations, Students and Youth
Attendance	
Source of Data	Online Registration (Zoom) and FB Live
Total Registered	218 pax
No of Attendees	Day 1 (Zoom): 163 pax Day 1 (FB Live): 512 pax Total attendees Day 1: 675 pax Day 2 (Zoom): 124 pax Day 2 (FB Live): 594 pax Total attendees Day 2: 718 pax Total attendees: 1,393 pax

Program Information (cont'd) – Detailed Itinerary

Item	Description
Opening Session	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome Remarks: YBhg. Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Sulaiman Mahbob (Board of Trustee MASA) 2. General Reflections: YB Dato Sri Hajah Rohani Abdul Karim (APPGM-SDG Chairman & MP of Batang Lupar) 3. General Remarks: Dr. Richard Marshall Economist (UN Country Team (Malaysia)) 4. Keynote Address : YB Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed (Minister in The Prime Minister's Department (Economy))
Plenary Session	<p>The Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department provides an overview of the Malaysian Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report that was presented at the High-Level Political Forum. It highlights key areas of progress and the ways to move forward for SDGs in Malaysia. This will be followed by a 20 minutes for question & answer session especially in the way forward in enhancing localising and partnerships.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keynote Speaker: Dr. Zunika Mohamed (Deputy Director General (Macro) Economic Planning Unit) 2. Prof. Datuk Dr. Denison Jayasooria (Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance Co-Chair & Senior Fellow MASA)
Session 1: Poverty & Nutrition (SDG 1 & 2)	<p>This session discusses the progress and contemporary challenges of SDG 1 and SDG 2. The discussion considers the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Malaysian society and the collective ways to address poverty. This topic is analysed in Chapter 2 of the VNR report.</p> <p>Moderator: Datuk Dr. Habibah Abdul Rahim (Adjunct Professor, UTM & Senior Fellow MASA)</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dato' Herman Abdul Hamid (Deputy Director, Equity Development Division, EPU) 2. YB Tuan William Leong (APPGM-SDG Secretary & MP Selayang) 3. Dr. Lin Mui Kiang (Society for the Promotion of Human Rights (PROHAM)) 4. Professor Dr. Sulochana Nair (Vice Chancellor, Binary University)

Program Information (cont'd) – Detailed Itinerary

Item	Description
<p>Session 2: Strengthening Resiliency & Transforming Healthcare (SDG 3)</p>	<p>This session discusses the progress and challenges of SDG 3 as Malaysia faces the COVID-19 pandemic. The discussion considers the integrated and interrelated aspects of health and wellbeing to further address the state of healthcare. This topic is analysed in Chapter 3 of the VNR Report.</p> <p>Moderator: Tunku Azela Tunku Aziz (Interim CEO, Institut Masa)</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Rozita Halina Tun Hussein (Director of the Planning Division, Ministry of Health) 2. YB Dr. Kelvin Yii Lee Wuen (APPGM-SDG Treasurer & MP of Bandar Kuching) 3. Dr. Murallitharan Munusamy (Director, National Cancer Society Malaysia) 4. Dr. Khor Swee Kheng (Associate Fellow, Global Health Programme, Chatham House)
<p>Session 3: Inclusive Economic Growth (SDG 8 & 10)</p>	<p>This session discusses the progress and challenges of SDG 8 and SDG 10 as the COVID-19 pandemic leaves a significant impact on the economy. This session further considers the ways to ensure equal access to opportunities for all to narrow unequal outcomes. This topic is analysed in Chapter 4 of the VNR Report.</p> <p>Moderator: YBhg. Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Sulaiman Mahbob (Board of Trustee MASA)</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Azlan Abdul Rashid (Director, Equity Development Division of Economic Planning Unit) 2. YB Tuan Ahmad Fahmi Fadzil (Member of APPGM-SDG & MP of Lembah Pantai) 3. Mr. Kon Onn Sein (Director, Yayasan Kajian Dan Pembangunan Masyarakat) 4. Prof. Dr. Jamal Othman (Deputy Chairman, Akademi Profesor Malaysia & Senior Fellow MASA)

Program Information (cont'd) – Detailed Itinerary

Item	Description
<p>Session 4: Sustainability & Climate Change (SDG 12 & 13)</p>	<p>This session discusses the progress and challenges of SDG 12 and SDG 13. This discussion considers Malaysia's commitment to sustainability and climate action for further action to mitigate and adapt to climate change. This topic is analysed in Chapter 5 of the VNR Report.</p> <p>Moderator: Ms. Zara Phang (Green Economy Analyst, WWF Malaysia & Fellow MASA)</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. K. Nagulendran (Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of Environment) 2. YB Tuan Wong Tack (Committee Member of APPGM-SDG & MP of Bentong) 3. Ms. Lavanya Rama Iyer (Head of Policy & Climate Change, WWF Malaysia) 4. Pn. Noorliza Hashim (CEO, Urbanice Malaysia & Fellow MASA)
<p>Session 5: Governance, Social Cohesion & Partnership (SDG 16 & 17)</p>	<p>This session discusses the progress and challenges of SDG 16 and SDG 17. This discussion considers the interrelated aspects of governance, social cohesion, and multi-stakeholder partnerships for peace and justice. This topic is analysed in Chapter 6 of the VNR Report.</p> <p>Moderator: Prof. Datuk Dr. Denison Jayasooria (Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance Co-Chair & Senior Fellow MASA)</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Baidilleh Bin Ghazali (Director, Security & Public Order Division, EPU) 2. YB Puan Maria Chin Abdullah (APPGM-SDG Deputy Chair & MP of Petaling Jaya) 3. Mr. Anthony Tan (Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance) 4. Prof. Datuk Dr. Ahmad Murad Mohd Noor Merican (Professor, ISTAC-IIUM & Senior Fellow MASA)

Program Information (cont'd) – Posters (1/6)



CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

THURSDAY, 22ND JULY 2021 & FRIDAY, 23RD JULY 2021 (9.00 AM – 1.00 PM)

To register, visit https://bit.ly/Registration_VNR-SDG

Through 6 to 16 July 2021, the United Nations meets online for the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). During this event, member states shall present its Voluntary National Review (VNR) and discuss the implementation progress of the Agenda 2030 on SDGs.

The government of Malaysia shall present its VNR report on 15 July 2021 (Thursday) between 9.00pm to 1.00am (Malaysia time). For the preparation of the report, there has been a consultative process with all the relevant agencies and civil society organisations.

This session will further serve as a platform for the government, civil society members, and the private sector to review the progress Malaysia has made over the years on SDGs. It aims to provide policy direction for the future, keeping in mind the goals of the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 (SPV 2030) and the 12th Malaysian Plan (2021-2025).

General Poster for Facebook



TOPICS ON 22ND JULY 2021

- Poverty & Nutrition
- Strengthening Resiliency & Transforming Healthcare

TOPICS ON 23RD JULY 2021

- Inclusive Economic Growth
- Sustainability & Climate Change
- Governance, Social Cohesion & Partnership



CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

22ND & 23RD JULY 2021 | 9.00 AM – 1.00 PM

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To register, visit https://bit.ly/Registration_VNR-SDG

TOPICS ON 22ND JULY 2021

- Poverty & Nutrition
- Strengthening Resiliency & Transforming Healthcare

TOPICS ON 23RD JULY 2021

- Inclusive Economic Growth
- Sustainability & Climate Change
- Governance, Social Cohesion & Partnership

General Poster for Instagram

Program Information (cont'd) – Posters (2/6)

CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

OPENING & PLENARY SESSION

THURSDAY, 22ND JULY 2021

(9.00 AM – 10.15 AM)

To register, visit https://bit.ly/Registration_VNR-SDG

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Speakers' Poster – Opening & Plenary Session

OPENING SESSION

KEYNOTE ADDRESS:
YB DATO' SRI MUSTAPA MOHAMED
Minister in The Prime Minister's Department (Economy)

WELCOME REMARKS:
YBHG. TAN SRI DATO' SERI DR. SULAIMAN MAHBOB
Board of Trustee MASA

GENERAL REFLECTIONS:
YB DATO' SRI HAJAH ROHANI ABDUL KARIM
APPGM-SDG Chairman & MP of Batang Lupar

GENERAL REMARKS:
DR. RICHARD MARSHALL
Economist, UN Country Team (Malaysia)

PLENARY SESSION

MODERATOR:
PROF. DATUK DR. DENISON JAYASOORIA
Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance Co-Chair & Senior Fellow MASA

SPEAKER:
DR. ZUNIKA MOHAMED
Deputy Director General (Macro), Economic Planning Unit

CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

SESSION 1: POVERTY & NUTRITION (SDG 1 & 2)

THURSDAY, 22ND JULY 2021

(10.20 AM – 11.35 AM)

To register, visit https://bit.ly/Registration_VNR-SDG

Through 6 to 16 July 2021, the United Nations meets online for the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). During this event, member states present its Voluntary National Review (VNR) and discuss the implementation progress of the Agenda 2030 on SDGs.

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Speakers' Poster – Session 1

SESSION 1: POVERTY & NUTRITION (SDG 1 & 2)

MODERATOR

DATUK DR. HABIBAH ABDUL RAHIM
Adjunct Professor, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia & Senior Fellow MASA

PANELISTS

DATO' HERMAN BIN ABDUL HAMID
Deputy Director, Equity Development Division, Economic Planning Unit

YB TUAN WILLIAM LEONG
APPGM-SDG Secretary & MP of Selangor

DR. LIN MUI KIANG
Society for the Promotion of Human Rights (PROHAM)

PROFESSOR DR. SULOCHANA NAIR
Vice Chancellor, Binary University

Program Information (cont'd) – Posters (3/6)

SESSION 2: STRENGTHENING RESILIENCY & TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE (SDG 3)

CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

THURSDAY, 22ND JULY 2021
(11.40 AM – 12.55 AM)

To register, visit https://bit.ly/Registration_VNR-SDG

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Speakers' Poster – Session 2

SESSION 2: STRENGTHENING RESILIENCY & TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE (SDG 3)

MODERATOR

 **YM TUNKU AZELA TUNKU AZIZ**
Interim CEO, MASA

PANELISTS

 **DR. ROZITA HALINA TUN HUSSEIN**
Senior Deputy Director of The Planning Division, Ministry of Health

 **YB DR. KELVIN YII LEE WUEN**
APPGM-SDG Treasurer & MP of Bandar Kuching

 **PROF. DR. SANJAY RAMPAL**
Head of Department of Social & Preventive Medicine, University of Malaya

 **DR. KHOR SWEE KHENG**
Associate Fellow, Global Health Programme, Chatham House

SESSION 3: INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH (SDG 8 & 10)

CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

FRIDAY, 23RD JULY 2021
(9.00 AM – 10.15 AM)

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Speakers' Poster – Session 3

SESSION 3: INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH (SDG 8 & 10)

MODERATOR

 **YBHG. TAN SRI DATO' SERI DR. SULAIMAN MAHBOB**
Board of Trustee MASA

PANELISTS

 **DR. ZUNIKA MOHAMED**
Deputy Director General (Macro), Economic Planning Unit

 **YB TUAN AHMAD FAHMI FADZIL**
Member of APPGM-SDG & MP of Lembah Pantai

 **MR. KON ONN SEIN**
Director, Yayasan Kajian Dan Pembangunan Masyarakat

 **PROF. DR. JAMAL OTHMAN**
Deputy Chairman, Akademi Profesor Malaysia & Senior Fellow MASA

Program Information (cont'd) – Posters (4/6)

SESSION 4: SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE (SDG 12 & 13)

CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

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MODERATOR

MS. ZARA PHANG
Green Economy Analyst,
WWF Malaysia & Fellow MASA

PANELISTS

DR. K. NAGULENDRAN
Deputy Secretary General,
Ministry of Environment

YB TUAN WONG TACK
Committee Member of APPGM-SDG
& MP of Bentong

MS. LAVANYA RAMA IYER
Head of Policy & Climate Change,
WWF Malaysia

PN. NOORLIZA HASHIM
CEO, Urbanise Malaysia
& Fellow MASA

FRIDAY, 23RD JULY 2021
(10.20 AM – 11.35 AM)

To register, visit
https://bit.ly/Registration_VNR-SDG

Speakers' Poster – Session 4

SESSION 5: GOVERNANCE, SOCIAL COHESION & PARTNERSHIP (SDG 16 & 17)

CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

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MODERATOR

PROF. DATUK DR. DENISON JAYASOORIA
Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance Co-Chair
& Senior Fellow MASA

PANELISTS

MR. BAIDILLEH BIN GHAZALI
Director, Security & Public Order Division,
Economic Planning Unit

YB PUAN MARIA CHIN ABDULLAH
APPGM-SDG Deputy Chairman
& MP of Petaling Jaya

MR. ANTHONY TAN
Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance

PROF. DATUK DR. AHMAD MURAD MOHD NOOR MERICAN
Professor, ISTAC-IJUM
& Senior Fellow MASA

FRIDAY, 23RD JULY 2021
(11.40 AM – 12.55 AM)

To register, visit
https://bit.ly/Registration_VNR-SDG

Speakers' Poster – Session 5

Program Information (cont'd) – Posters (5/6)

CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

22ND JULY 2021 | 9.00 AM – 1.00 PM

TIME	ITINERARY
9.00 AM – 9.30 AM	OPENING SESSION Welcome Remarks: YBhg. Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Sulaiman Mahbob, Board of Trustee MASA General Reflections: YB Dato' Sri Hajah Rohani Abdul Karim, APPGM-SDG Chair & MP of Batang Lupar General Remarks: Dr. Richard Marshall, UN Economist Keynote Address: YBM Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, Minister in The Prime Minister's Department (Economy)
9.30 AM – 10.15 AM	PLENARY SESSION The Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department provides an overview of the Malaysian Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report that was presented at the High-Level Political Forum. It highlights key areas of progress and the ways to move forward for SDGs in Malaysia. This will be followed by a 20 minutes for question & answer session especially in the way forward in enhancing localising and partnerships.
10.20 AM – 11.35 AM	SESSION 1: POVERTY & NUTRITION (SDG 1 & 2) This session discusses the progress and contemporary challenges of SDG 1 and SDG 2. The discussion considers the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Malaysian society and the collective ways to address poverty. This topic is analysed in Chapter 2 of the VNR report.
11.40 AM – 12.55 PM	SESSION 2: STRENGTHENING RESILIENCY & TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE (SDG 3) This session discusses the progress and challenges of SDG 3 as Malaysia faces the COVID-19 pandemic. The discussion considers the integrated and interrelated aspects of health and wellbeing to further address the state of healthcare. This topic is analysed in Chapter 3 of the VNR Report.
1.00 PM	ENDS

Itinerary Poster – Day 1

CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

23RD JULY 2021 | 9.00 AM – 1.00 PM

TIME	ITINERARY
9.00 AM – 10.15 AM	SESSION 3: INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH (SDG 8 & 10) This session discusses the progress and challenges of SDG 8 and SDG 10 as the COVID-19 pandemic leaves a significant impact on the economy. This session further considers the ways to ensure equal access to opportunities for all to narrow unequal outcomes. This topic is analysed in Chapter 4 of the VNR Report.
10.20 AM – 11.35 AM	SESSION 4: SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE (SDG 12 & 13) This session discusses the progress and challenges of SDG 12 and SDG 13. This discussion considers Malaysia's commitment to sustainability and climate action for further action to mitigate and adapt to climate change. This topic is analysed in Chapter 5 of the VNR Report.
11.40 AM – 12.55 PM	SESSION 5: GOVERNANCE, SOCIAL COHESION & PARTNERSHIP (SDG 16 & 17) This session discusses the progress and challenges of SDG 16 and SDG 17. This discussion considers the interrelated aspects of governance, social cohesion, and multi-stakeholder partnerships for peace and justice. This topic is analysed in Chapter 6 of the VNR Report.
1.00 PM	ENDS

Itinerary Poster – Day 2

Program Information (cont'd) – Posters (6/6)



Background Poster – Zoom

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 1

Moderator: Datuk Dr. Habibah Abdul Rahim (Adjunct Professor, UTM & Senior Fellow MASA)



Moderator's Introduction

- Datuk Dr Habibah served as the moderator for this session regarding Sustainable Development Goals 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger). She started off with congratulating the VNR report which has successfully highlighted the significant achievements in eradicating poverty and narrowing inequalities, as well as providing better quality of life for the people. However, there seems to be remaining pockets that are of disadvantaged among select groups and regions, as well as multi dimensional deprecations. In addition, the onset of the Covid-19 has been seen to reverse some of the gains and worsened a distinct social and economic inequalities.

Moderator's Closing Remarks

- The moderator summed up the issues and way forward expounded by the panelists. Summarized the issues of disaggregated poverty data, lapses in the social safety net, exclusivity of aid, inequality in poverty and income as well as malnutrition and food security. She also summarized the ways forward which include creating a centralized poverty database, strengthening social safety nets, revamping the fragmented social safety delivery system as well as improving food security through better utilization of agricultural land.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 1

Panelist 1: Dato' Herman Abdul Hamid (Deputy Director, Equity Development Division, Economic Planning Unit) (1/3)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

- The deputy director of the Equity Development Division in the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) agreed that the VNR Report is timely. Dato' Herman said "poverty eradication is one of the associated on the agenda for each Malaysia plan. Poverty and inequality will be fully addressed in The 12th Malaysia plan and the Shared Prosperity Vision (SPV) to ensure no one is left behind.
- The absolute poverty rate dropped to 0.2% in 2019 with the incidence of household living below the international poverty line nearly eradicated, now at only 0.3%. The Poverty Line Income (PLI) has been revised, from RM980 to RM2,208, reflecting a more realistic reflection of poverty in Malaysia. Absolute poverty declined to 5.6%, hardcore poor declined to only 0.4% Biggest reduction in poverty was experienced by Bumiputera households, now only 7.2% of them are considered poor.
- Pockets of poverty and vulnerabilities persist even after so many years of independence. Poverty is concentrated with those who live in rural areas, the people of Sabah and Kelantan, among Orang Asli, as well as with children and the elderly. Though incidence of relative poverty has been reduced in the country, relative poverty is still higher in more developed states. Relative poverty also exhibits itself more among female head households, elderly, Bumiputera and those who are salary earners.
- Social protection in Malaysia is broad, with many government programs and agencies involved in providing assistance. However, these actions are mostly fragmented and not optimally coordinated. The problem doesn't end there, government spending on social protection is at 6.28% of GDP, lower than the global average of 8.6% and 21% of OECD countries.
- In terms of inclusive growth, poverty rates across strata and all ethnic groups have improved. The biggest reduction in poverty experienced Bumiputera households, from 1970 to 7.2% in 2019. The number of poor households declined from 525,743 households in 2016 to 405,441 households in 2019. Median also grew 3.9% from 2016 to RMS,873 in 2019. Government assistance and initiative has enhanced inclusive development. In 2019 and 2020, RM 10 bil were given to 8.3 millions recipients. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, RM 18.2 bil was rolled out to 18 million recipients.
- On to the 2nd part of his assessment, Dato' Herman talked about the SDG2 (Zero Hunger). Despite Malaysia's efforts in achieving SDG 2 targets, the prevalence of underweight among children under 5 years of age, stunting and wasting among children below 5 years of age and anaemia among women (aged 15-49) continue to increase. On the positive note, the prevalence of overweight among children under 5 has decreased.
- From existing programmes the government has implemented, Dato' Herman highlighted that in improving nutritional programmes, the implementation of the "First 1,000 Days of Life" programme for improving nutritional status for children has been strengthened. The Rehabilitation Program for malnourished children, aged between 6 months and 6 years from poor families and a community feeding programme aimed at children under 5 from indigenous (Orang Asli).
- In strengthening food and nutrition security, the Government launched the National Agrofood Policy (2011-2020). Subsequently, due to concerns over the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on national food security, a Cabinet Committee on the National Food Security Policy (FSCC) was set up in March 2020. The Government has recently reviewed the National Nutrition Policy of Malaysia as well as the National Plan of Action for Nutrition in Malaysia III (NPANM III, 2016-2025) for the second term of implementation. The NPANM III (2016-2025) has three main objectives, which are to enhance nutritional status, reduce diet related NCDs, and strengthen food and nutrition security.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 1

Panelist 1: Dato' Herman Abdul Hamid (Deputy Director, Equity Development Division, Economic Planning Unit) (2/3)



Topic: Issues Raised

- In terms of Issues and Challenges, Dato' Herman Abdul Hamid indicated 3 key points for SDG 1 and that related to absolute poverty, relative poverty and social protection.
- The incidence of absolute poverty decreased from 7.6% 2016 to 5.6% 2019. However, pockets of poverty and vulnerabilities still persist. Poverty concentrates in rural areas (12.4%), Sabah (19.5%), Kelantan (12.5%), among the orang Asli (33.5%), children (2016,1.7%), and the elderly (5.7%).
- The incidence of relative poverty reduced from 15.9% in 2016 to 16.9% in 2019. However, relative poverty is higher among developed states such as Selangor, Penang, Kuala Lumpur. Relative poverty is also higher among female headed households, rural households, the elderly, among employees and among the Bumiputra households.
- Social protection in Malaysia is broad yet fragmented and less coordinated. Government spending on social protection is 6.28% Of GDP, which is lower than the global and OECD average at 8.6% and 21%, respectively.
- Explaining the major issues faced in achieving SDG2, he explained that we face 3 huge hurdles. Firstly, the double burden of malnutrition and a rise in Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). There exists differing prevalence of indicators of stunting and underweight between locations and ethnicity groups. As well as different risks for NCDs between genders.
- Secondly, Malaysians still face the issue of malnutrition. Major contributing factors to this issue include lack of public expenditure on agricultural research and development and infrastructure as well as dependency on food import.
- Third and lastly, the availability of nutritional food is still far from optimum. Malaysia's food import bill has risen by an annual average of 6.5 per cent from 2000 to 2019. The huge food import bill has impacted the quantity, quality, affordability and accessibility of food especially for the poor. This issue is further exacerbated by the scarcity of land use for food production, in which approximately 85 percent of the country's 8 million hectares of agricultural land are planted with industrial commodities mainly oil palm and rubber.
- COVID-19 prevented smooth delivery and implementation of nutritional food initiatives, which impact children in school, preventing children from low-income households to benefit from the Government's free food programmes.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 1

Panelist 1: Dato' Herman Abdul Hamid (Deputy Director, Equity Development Division, Economic Planning Unit) (3/3)



Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

- On the matter of recommendations, the high official of EPU suggested three points for SDG 1 and three points for SDG 2.
- First off, Malaysia has to review the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI). As the current MPI measurements are no longer relevant for an upper middle-income country like Malaysia. MPI dimensions and indicators such as standards of living and health will be reviewed. These include introducing new indicators such as access to the internet and digital devices.
- Secondly, there is an urgent need to reform Malaysia's social protection and social security system. Social protection coverage is low among working age adults. Private sector employees are obligated to the social security system, but the majority of self employed are not covered. This provides opportunities to expand social security coverage to all adults.
- Thirdly is to strengthen social assistance for vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities (PWDs). Social assistance is broad and lacks coordination for the poor, children, elderly and PWDs. Therefore, mapping social assistance and the targeted groups needed to avoid duplication. Strengthening social assistance for vulnerable groups will be enhanced through Pangkalan Data Perlindungan Sosial (PDPS) under My Social Protection Council (MySPC). These include initiatives to enhance social protection, poverty eradication, affordable housing, quality education and health and improving service delivery mechanisms.
- On the other hand, the panelist suggested 3 broad policy recommendations for SDG 2, this effort should work together with all the stakeholders.
- Firstly, the government should address stunting and malnutrition through national nutrition policies. This can be done through a provision of household food security, quality healthcare services, a healthy environment, and adequate care and feeding practices. The national target should be to reduce the prevalence of stunting to 11 percent by 2025.
- Secondly, there must be a concerted effort to enhance food security by formulating a new national agro-food policy and action plan. The targeted outcomes include reducing national dependence on food imports, stable food prices, healthier eating habits, sustainable food production as well as increased private sector's role and involvement in strengthening the food systems.
- Lastly, there must be continuous assessment and monitoring the structural outcomes of nutrition in order to achieve the necessary three targets.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 1

Panelist 2: YB Tuan William Leong (APPGM-SDG Secretary & MP of Selayang) (1/2)



Topic: General assessment of the VNR Report

- The Selayang Parliamentarian started off by congratulating the government on its role in producing the second VNR. However, he raised a few concerns regarding the report.

Topic: Issues Raised

- YB William's first question is with regard to "whether we are using the correct PLI?" The absolute poverty rate measured by using the national poverty line indicated a low poverty rate (0.2%), this means that Malaysia has substantially eradicated poverty and reached SDG 1 in 2019 - however the number does not actually reflect the truth on the ground.
- The level of the current poverty line income (PLI) should also be scrutinized again. YB William reminded everyone that the previous PLI of RM980 was heavily criticized as being too low. The question to be asked now is whether the new PLI of RM2,208 should be the new standard. Or should the PLI, at least for urban areas, be raised to RM3,280 which is half of the urban median income of RM6,560.
- What is needed is a realistic poverty line income that captures the deprivation and vulnerabilities of the world. The question is really not how much the poverty line income should be. The question is, who are the poor and how did they become poor, what needs to be done?
- Another problem faced is when we get too caught up with measurements, that we forget that the primary objective of solving the poverty problem is on the ground and not just on paper. This happens when we allow the means to obscure the ends when we try to fit the incidence of poverty measurement.
- By denying the existence of public view or by minimizing the problem, it has encouraged under investment in poverty reduction, caused widespread misunderstanding of who is poor and has led to bad policymaking. Therefore, having a correct PLI is an urgent priority. The use of the relative poverty indicator and multidimensional poverty index is a better approach.
- The issue is that urban poverty is now a national emergency. It is the new face of poverty, and it must be recognized as a different phase from rural poverty. It must be recognized as such and dealt with according to its peculiar needs.
- YB William Leong disagrees that poverty has been largely eradicated and only exists in isolated pockets among the indigenous people and the rural areas. The truth is that poverty has been staring at us in urban areas for all while except that it has long been acknowledged as urban poverty in its original intervention.
- Covid-19 has shown that poverty is race blind and affects migrants, refugees, citizens, and non-citizens, stateless people and it bounced back to the greater community because you cannot contain the pandemic because we have people left outside. So, people who until now are not captured by the official statistics, they are invisible. So, for the purpose of official statistics reporting on the success of reducing poverty they do not exist. If we are really going to live up to the idealism of "No One in Malaysia Left Behind", then the Invisible Man must be recognized.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 1

Panelist 2: YB Tuan William Leong (APPGM-SDG Secretary & MP of Selayang) (2/2)



Topic: Issues Raised

- Social inclusivity is the key principle in Malaysia's development. However, after more than half a century of NEP unity remains very much a work in progress. In fact, we are more polarized and we are further apart than before. We must acknowledge that being wealthy or living in poverty is not due to our DNA. Race is a social construct. It is important that we deal squarely with the fact that poverty is due to social economic conditions in order to eradicate poverty.
- For SDG 2, YB William highlighted that the prevalence of stunting and underweight children and of the pregnant mothers who are suffering from anemia are serious problems.
- He referred to the data shown in the UNICEF study of child poverty in Kuala Lumpur, where low cost flat reported 22% of the children below the age of five are stunted, 15% are underweight, 23% are overweight or obese and 4 in 10 households have no toys and they have no conducive place to study and their surrounding environment is unsafe. Only one or two of those aged five and six are in preschool. More than one in ten children had three meals a day. 97% of the households say that high food prices prevent them from preparing healthy meals for their children. One in two do not have enough food to buy food in recent months and 15% experienced is frequently adjusted for household size, the relative poverty rate of these children almost one hundred percent, and this is before Covid 19.
- The strike of Covid 19 has worsened the condition, people are now struggling to survive and with even less. He pointed out that the united study highlights urban poverty and malnutrition as an emerging national disaster. There is an urgency for policy intervention to ensure children in poor urban settings are included in wider malnutrition in preschool education requiring urgent intervention policies.

Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

- The government should institute reforms to ensure that the needs of their own people living in poverty are comprehensively addressed. This will benefit the country as a whole. Racial inequalities along racial lines, which unfortunately until today still prevails that poverty is related to race. It is important for the government to proceed on the basis that poverty eradication programmes must be for all races and all ethnicities. All affected must be helped to get out of the poverty circle and move to the circle of prosperities.
- YB William concluded with his belief that SDG is providing new milestones and he looked forward for APPGM to contributing and leading the SDG to become a reality so that we in Malaysia and stayed in one voice that No one is left behind.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 1

Panelist 3: Dr. Lin Mui Kiang (Society for the Promotion of Human Rights, PROHAM) (1/2)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

- Dr Lin started off her session with the same points as other panelists and then talked about employment. Based on her research she has found that the pandemic has reversed some of Malaysia's gains in poverty reduction. The absolute poverty rate has increased from 5.6% in 2019 to 8.4% in 2020 and is expected to increase further in 2021. In 2020, monthly median wages dropped 15.6% while average wages dropped 9%. This affects 9.4 million (63%) of the 15 million workers in the labour force. 91% of retail businesses suffered decline and laid off 50,000 workers. 30% of shops at malls have closed and laid off 300,000 workers. 100,000 SMEs have ceased operations since the first MCO, and another 50,000 during this 3rd MCO. The majority were micro-SMEs, making up 79.5% of the closures during the MCO and 70.8% during the RMCO, and the majority have yet to receive government assistance.
- Challenges are more pronounced for B40 HHs (urban and rural), women, children, elderly, persons with disabilities (PWDs), indigenous peoples, homeless, stateless persons, migrants and refugees. On to the second part of her explainer, Dr Lin agreed with the points of Dato' Herman that malnutrition remains a huge challenge in the Malaysian society. She added that the deterioration of stunting and underweight among children took place before COVID-19 pandemic and would have deteriorated further since.
- Underweight among the children below the age of 5 increased from 13.7% (2016) to 14.1% (2019) and stunting for children below the age of 5 has also went up from 20.7% (2016) to 21.8% (2019). Malaysia's adult population also faces a malnutrition burden. 24.9% of women of reproductive age have anaemia, and 11.4% of men and 10.7% of women have diabetes. Meanwhile, 17.9% of women and 13% of men suffer from obesity. Malaysia is among the fattest countries in SEA and in the Asia Pacific region. NCDs dominate as the leading causes of premature death (70%) and disability. NCDs reduce individual productivity and quality of life, and unnecessarily raise health costs, with 10% to 19% of national healthcare expenditure in 2018 spent on obesity-related matters alone. Malnutrition among indigenous peoples is a serious concern due to diminishing access to traditional food sources leading to severe stunting and malnourishment. Malnutrition, stunting and wasting have serious implications: The effects on brain and physical development are irreversible. These will result in intergenerational poverty for the HHs which will adversely impact efforts to eradicate poverty. These will have long-term effects on human resource development for the country.

Topic: Issues Raised

- The HH debt-to-GDP ratio surged to 93.3% as at December 2020 from its previous high of 87.5% in June 2020. Using ASB and EPF data as proxies, it is shown that 9.37% of depositors held 82.89% of ASB share units, while 24.7% of EPF account holders own 74.9% of all savings in EPF. The average EPF members' savings for those below RM100,000 in savings remain at RM29,510 – implications for an aging population. The informal and other casual sectors which make up 19% of the labour force are not covered by EPF, SOCSO or any other social protection schemes. Gaps in access to basic amenities such as access to treated piped water in the house, especially in Kelantan (67.9%), Sabah (84.7%), and Sarawak (86.4%). The rate is much lower in the rural area of Kelantan (61.9 per cent), Sabah (66.4 per cent), and Sarawak (69.8 per cent). Digital divide both in service coverage and literacy leading to inequalities in education and business opportunities. Inequality between women and men in a HH is a strong contributing factor to overall income inequality and other forms of well-being such as health and education.
- Dr Lin further bemoaned the fact that the exclusion rate from social welfare aid is high. JKM has acknowledged that 34% of HHs did not get assistance even though they qualified for aid. Many poor people fall between the cracks. The bad news doesn't end there, the PEMULIH/PRIHATIN packages allocate an insufficient amount of fiscal injection to support businesses, workers and HH. The i-Lestari policy has caused a severe depletion of savings and poses serious challenges for workers' retirement.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 1

Panelist 3: Dr. Lin Mui Kiang (Society for the Promotion of Human Rights, PROHAM) (2/2)



Topic: Issues Raised

- Dr Lin explained that Malaysia's food import bill has risen by an average of 6.5% per year from RM30 billion in 2010 to RM50 billion in 2018. Partly this is attributed to the fact that about 85% of the country's 8 million hectares of agricultural land are planted with oil palm and rubber with only 8% left for agro-food, and about 120,000 ha are abandoned. Such a high dependence on importing essential food items has made the prices of rice, eggs, and instant noodles rise by 40% while the intake of vegetables and fruits dropped by 40%.
- She made a salient point that investment in food production should not only be evaluated in terms of private benefits but also social returns and the country's security. This requires an ecosystem and a mix between food policy, smart technology and entrepreneurship to develop healthy sustainable food systems. For many years there has been underinvestment in R&D in the agriculture sector and inadequate extension services. R&D as a share of agricultural GDP declined from its peak of 1.88 percent in 2002 to 0.85 percent in 2016.

Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

- APPGM's Head of Solutions then shifted her focus on providing recommendations to better achieve SDG1. Firstly, the social welfare system needs to be revamped as it is inefficient and fragmented. There is a need to establish a social protection floor with universal access and basic protection for all. Secondly, there is a need to expand the social safety net for the self-employed and informal workers as 19% of the heads of HHs are self-employed and the percentage is higher among female heads of HHs at 33%. Thirdly, creation of job opportunities has to be intensified by encouraging the expansion of private domestic and foreign investments. Local business players must be incentivized to adopt new technologies, raise productivity and wages, and reduce migrant workers which depress local wages. Her fourth point was to promote entrepreneurship, as it is crucial to tap the potential of youth into the economy. Lastly, Dr Lin called on the government to focus on providing balanced development and improving the provision of basic infrastructure and amenities, internet connectivity, affordable housing, quality education and health services, social protection and service delivery mechanisms.
- Dr Lin called for a holistic approach to nutritional improvement starting with the crucial first 1,000 days of life, as what Datuk Herman explained in his session. A huge awareness campaign and education drive has to be made to foster healthier eating habits among the population. Relevant authorities have to address the availability of financial resources as the underlying determinant for nutritional outcomes because long term approaches such as income generating activities are important for sustainable nutritional improvement. A national increase in food production to reduce imports and ensure stable food prices and facilitate access to affordable nutritious food should be the cross-cutting goal of the government's actions.
- To ensure food security is achieved in Malaysia, Dr Lin proposes that sufficient land is made available for food production as well as to ensure security of land tenure through establishing property rights for small-scale food producers or promoting long-term rental contracts to encourage them to make investments to improve the land. Secondly, encourage youth, skilled and professional labour force participation in modern agriculture. Use of high-end technology could attract youth to re-look their employment opportunities. Thirdly, there is a need to adopt SDG 17 to strengthen the means of implementation, encourage and promote effective public-private sector and civil society partnerships. We need to adopt a whole of nation/society approach, incorporating bottom-up considerations in order to develop in an integrated and holistic manner. And lastly, the key to success in operationalizing national policies, plans and programmes would be to internalize SDG 16 to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 1

Panelist 4: Professor Dr. Sulochana Nair (Vice Chancellor, Binary University) (1/2)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

- Professor Dr. Sulochana Nair acknowledged Malaysia's work in addressing poverty and nutrition. However, she also pointed out that it's important to analyze, address and overcome the challenges that continually remained and persisted.

Topic: Issues Raised

- Dr Sulochana agreed with YB William on the concern of the poverty line. She found that the poverty line not really reflecting the true picture of the multi dimensional nature of poverty on ground. PLI is a good starting point, however it should be only used as a Falcon point, not be used as a criteria to provide aid to those in poverty. Lack of income is only one manifestation of poverty, there are several other manifestations which are equally important, so if we use PLI to determine poverty, the true face of poverty remains underground.
- She acknowledges that capital approaches are very important, however we should be less obsessed with the numbers and move on and tackle the rarities of poverty on the ground; a blanket approach towards poverty reduction is not workable.
- Dr Sulochana's second point is with regards to employment, a critical indicator and manifestation of poverty. Whether it is in the formal sector or in the informal sector, the status is not well captured in MPI.
- Around 16% of Malaysian are involved in the informal workforce. The informal sector which includes the gig economy and the platform economy have been seriously ravaged by the impact of Covid-19. It includes domestic workers, women and men who work from home and several other aspects. A lot of workers' economies are very vulnerable - no employment contract, no social protection, no legal recognition.
- Many urban middle-income households are dependent on the informal sector for various goods and services, thus it's very important that the sector could be given adequate attention. She suggested that Malaysia has to move in and provide some kind of recognition for the informal sector and social protection.
- Dr Sulochana also pointed out that increasing families are pushed into poverty during covid 19, especially people in the tourism, hospitality and aviation sectors. There is widening income inequality in the Community as a result of unemployment.
- She urged for attention to be paid to the new part of the fabric of abolition society, underemployment is prevalent. People are taking up jobs which are below their qualifications and below their capability, they're not being very productive. It is wrong to assume that everyone can work from home. They are competing with the children who require the same gadgets to access education.
- There is no infrastructure and tools provided for people to work from home, and this has an impact on productivity and if this is likely to be the new norm for the future, then some serious attention will need to be paid from equipping people to work productively from home.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 1

Panelist 4: Professor Dr. Sulochana Nair (Vice Chancellor, Binary University) (2/2)



Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

- The way forward for nutrition is concern, Dr Sulochana suggested food baskets for the new poor.
- She is aware that food handouts are happening both by the government and by the private sector and as well as individuals for babies, and the needy people. However, we should take in the malnutrition, stunting and wasting all in the consideration.
- Political stability is another important fundamental for quality living.
- She went further with the various new opportunities raised during Covid-19 such as platform economy and online economy. “It's very important to leverage on communities. Communities did not let their members down, they showed resilience by sharing resources”.
- Dr Sulochana concluded her sharing by bringing out the role that social enterprises can play in addressing the challenges. The social enterprises have come into the forefront to provide educational resources, health access, face mask, PPE and food. Social enterprises can be leveraged to provide solutions for the way forward.
- She ends by emphasizing that SDG must be integrated and aligned with the Covid-19 recovery plans.

Q&A Session – Session 1 (1/3)

No	Question	Answer
1	How will Malaysia navigate the policy of Social Safety nets in the future?	<p>Dato’ Herman: We are lucky that some data like E-kasih, e-bantuan, BSH are already in place, transfer can be done automatically. However, some rural areas do not have banking systems, mobile service will be reached by the respective state authorities. Moving forward, we will integrate the system. All the coordination, all policies implementations be centralized under one system with “data perlindungan sosial”. The Protection Council, which has already been established in a way to make things happen.</p> <p>YB William: Agreed that data in a moment is fragmented and if it can be consolidated not to live among the ministries, but also shared with the State government and would make a more effective social safety net. The situation now is that you will find one person that may be receiving it from two or three different sources, while some totally left out of it due to the gaps in the data. Tapering off all the three levels of governments would have a more effective social safety net.</p> <p>Dr Lin: We have more than a hundred and twenty programs implemented by different agencies and still we are not delivering the result, because there are so many people left out and JKM itself acknowledged that 34% of those who are eligible are not given any aid. We need professional and qualified social workers for JKM, to determine what is needed and not only cash, but also take in the consideration such as sickness, mental challenges, in order to address problems in a holistic manner and avoid duplication of services. Besides, the welfare program should make it more accessible and friendly to those who are homeless.</p> <p>Dr Sulochana : There are many problems in very poor families. We really have to look back and reform the whole system and get qualified social welfare workers to attend to the urgency during this pandemic. It's very important for Malaysia to have a comprehensive social safety net that provides protection to the vulnerable at a time of crisis.</p>
2	Will the government embark on nationwide integrated livestock farming system and close loop system to address land scarcity and high colivest of Animal feed?	<p>Dato’ Herman: The Committee for the Food Security Cabinet is formulating the nation's policies moving forward and there will be a balance between in order to reduce the import bills.</p>

Q&A Session – Session 1 (2/3)

No	Question	Answer
3	<p>The Way Forward for Poverty eradication does not seem to employ the WOG and WOS approach? Any program to empower the poor through enabling economic activities for them?...as the saying goes, give them the fishing rods, not the fish?</p>	<p>Dato' Herman: The idea of SDG is being localized. So once we proceed with the programs for the localization of the SDG, where the programs and initiatives are proposed from the bottom up, then it would be a more effective way of working. Poverty and inequality is not only from the monetary terms alone, but also from the other multidimensional poverty dimension such as level of education, thus Dato Herman also emphasized to look into the causes of poverty in the country, including from the behavioral side.</p> <p>YB William: Human development in all aspects, give them the capability. It is important to look at human development or his experiences, give them the capabilities, so they can function to live their life.</p> <p>Dr Lin: On the macro level, there should be a more equitable distribution of allocation of resources to all regions of the country. Some are really remote and have been neglected. We need to do all this in order to create industries, create production and to increase employment so that they don't have to all rush to the rural areas where they can't even get jobs. Drug addiction among youths is a very serious problem and we need to give them alternatives in it, which is to have jobs and income, they need to have a purpose in life.</p> <p>Dr Sulochana : There is a need to empower the poor by integrating them into the decision-making process. Capacity building at the grassroots level is very important, we need to identify local champions from the area of the poverty groups who can be the role models to refer, they need role models from their own group, to aspire and improve themselves. There are certain very poor groups to whom we have to give the fish, because even if we get them the net, they are not in a position to actually do anything with the fishing net; and some groups require both, the handouts and also the capacity building to improve their income earning ability. Dr Sulo also emphasized the importance of encouraging savings of households. A lot of studies have shown that many households either have very low levels of savings or no savings at all. In Dr Sulo's work, she found that some households had very low-income levels but had very high expenditure. That indicates that there is a very high debt burden especially in the urban area, and this needs to be tackled because they're borrowing to get the daily use. There's a wide gap between income and expenditure.</p>

Q&A Session – Session 1 (3/3)

No	Question	Answer
4	How do smallholders benefit from the nation's plan on poverty and food?	<p>Dr Lin: This has always been a very serious problem and the government has allocated a lot of money in the budget for many agencies and ministries, but whether all of these budgets reach the target groups is in doubt. Seems many government agencies are not performing well and working in silo. We need a better and an integrated and more holistic approach. The thing about nutrition is that we really need to educate, raise awareness among the population on nutrition and food security. A lot of our parents in a poor areas who are working, will just give some money to the children to buy whatever food they like, even if they have money to buy food, they are still not eating properly. So awareness and education is very important and of course the financial too.</p> <p>Dr Sulochana: Everyone has been affected by the Covid-19. Dr Sulo was so upset to see that fruit and vegetable farmers from Cameron Highland had to dump their vegetables due to lack of proper marketing facilities and proper integration, while there are people in the country who need these vegetables and fruits. She urged that smallholders across all sectors should be integrated into the recovery plans equally. Lastly, she pointed out that the targeted approach which Malaysia used to have in the past for poverty eradication is still very relevant. She suggested working with NGO or CSO who are dealing with the poor, utilizing their data and integrating it into the national plan and not to collect the data again which will duplicate the work.</p>

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 2

Moderator: Tunku Azela Tunku Aziz (Interim CEO, MASA)



Moderator's Introduction

- The second session covers chapter three of the VNR report, SDG 3, which carries the title of strengthening, resiliency, and transforming health care. Our health system now possesses an efficient healthcare system consisting of public and private providers. As a result, our health indicators are almost at par with developed countries, which indicate in the VNR reports. However, over the past 17 months, healthcare, like so many countries, has been severely tested with the unrelentless COVID-19 pandemic. The realization now to everyone is that health is everything, so SDG three is so critical.

Moderator's Closing Remarks

- Moderator would like to sum up this session. We have heard from all the panelists, and there is a consensus that the government has done a commendable job providing healthcare to Malaysia's *rakyat*, as depicted in the VNR2021. As always, there is always room for improvement for example:
 1. NCDs,
 2. Mental illness,
 3. Methodology of data collection,
 4. Distribution of health professionals
 5. Measurement of resilience,
 6. Silos in the utilization of resources, amongst others
- And this needs to be accelerated now that Covid is here. However, let us look at the positive side – Covid19 can be a catalyst to our efforts to improve our healthcare system and public policies. Can health be the new GDP? Should we create a health Reform commission? Is the SDG benchmark enough, or should we go for higher targets as SDG covers the whole world. Here is the key highlight from the panelists:
 1. YB Kelvin: COVID-19 as a stress test, economy to social security, showing the vulnerability of the healthcare system, people's trust to government, and the importance of social cohesion and integration.
 2. Dr. Rozita: Regarding reforms, there have been various modalities of health reforms. While there is no big bang for reform, there have been incremental improvements through the systems.
 3. Dr. Khor: The SDGs goals are guidelines and minimum standards, but Malaysia can look towards desired standards as an upper-middle-income country's average. Health is a new deal. A deal required a political will and skill to reform it.
 4. Dr. Murallitharan M: A reform in health doesn't require money. It involves simple steps, but importantly the stakeholders must sit on one page. So, it's about the collective effort from all stakeholders and willingness to do so.
- Key statement from all speeches: There is a need for Malaysia to prioritize health and wellbeing across all sectors, taking the integrated whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach. In short, everyone agrees that moving forward, for health reform:
 1. We need political will and collective effort
 2. Health is a shared responsibility and requires a multiparty approach – public, private, and CSOs. Healthcare is not solely the responsibility of MOH and medical providers but also every sector of society.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 2

Panelist 1: Dr. Rozita Halina Tun Hussein (Director of the Planning Division, Ministry of Health)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

- This chapter is well written and highlights some of the key areas within our health system in the context of achievements, challenges. But, most importantly, it allows discussing how to address the critical issues while protecting and improving in the health system.
- Since independence, the health system, through the guidance of MOH specifically and government in general, has achieved many milestones and good results. This is reflected in the achievement of SDG targets and indicators, as seen in the table in Chapter 3. International agencies such as the World Bank have acknowledged malicious achievement of effective universal health coverage since the 1980s through our public sector tax-funded system. Since independence, the public system holds a premium in extending access to health care. Because we long recognized the interplay of health and various social determinants.
- The report shows that more than 70% of the population excess and depend on the public health care system to provide universal health coverage, and it covers 98% of health care cost. In its provision, however, the health sector is most sensitive to the challenges. The Ministry of Health has been looking at various modalities of health reform and improvement for the past 25 years. Reform efforts certainly have done many incremental changes that allow the health system to remain resilient and strong despite the low investment in health. On this point, the VNR highlights that Malaysia is the country that spends only about four point 3% of GDP and 52% of that is public funding, which is about 2.66% Of GDP. This contrasts with average health spending for countries of the upper-middle-income level of about 7% of GDP, and The WHO suggests that for a robust and resilient health system, about 5% of GDP on health should be under public sector management
- The VNR provides a few broad, solid suggestions under the five headings of enhancing existing health care coverage. For example, the first heading is health system delivery for better health outcomes, followed by intensifying efforts to control communicable and non-communicable diseases. The third headings are explored health financing alternatives for improving affordability and sustainability, prioritizing preventive health care approach towards improved health outcomes, and strengthening wellbeing.
- This is evident in handling the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministry of Health alone cannot do it. Sector providers, especially with the emphasis on primary care, through various initiatives, initiatives, and mechanisms. These include the PICK, which stands for the national COVID-19 immunization program. In addition, the Ministry of Health can contract private GPS, private hospitals, health care organizations, and NGOs.

Topic: Issues raised

- The VNR makes a time series comparison from 2017 to 2019 were available to monitor progress. However, that time frame for the health system, in particular, maybe relatively short. Also, a helpful comparison would be with other countries of similar levels of development and some benchmarks set by recognized international agencies.

Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

- Society must keep readjusting until they all develop new lifestyle norms, whether at work, home or play. Even with vaccination, living with COVID as it becomes endemic in society after the pandemic
- Recognizing that health is a shared responsibility, the approach to the health care system has to be recalibrated. It requires similar commitment and involvement from society, the private and non-government sectors with collective governance and responsibility.
- We are moving on to establishing an integrated and interconnected health ecosystem that includes not only MHO facilities, but other government data platforms, population health agencies as well as private. These efforts to implement MHO electronic medical record system in all facilities are undertaken with an initial pilot.
- Efforts to implement MHO electronic medical record system in all facilities are being undertaken with an initial pilot. It will complement innovations from the private sectors such as the digital health hub that focuses on five core virtual health scenarios. Telehealth intelligent access, remote patient monitoring, drug adherence, and corporate Wellness.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 2

Panelist 2: YB Dr. Kelvin Yii Lee Wuen (APPGM-SDG Treasurer & MP of Bandar Kuching)



Topic: Issues raised

- Some neglected issues like diseases and unfavorable outcomes, have been exacerbated by COVID-19, which need to be addressed in the VNR report because it has shown vulnerabilities in our health system. These matters have profound implications, of course, throughout the health, economical progress, people's trust in government, and social integration and cohesion. So, it is a reality check for many aspects as well as the readiness of our health care system.
- The current COVID-19 has shown that our health care system wasn't prepared and unable to cope, due to the new virus but could be due to neglect and years of misprioritization especially in acute care.

Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

- Important to focus battle on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD), which has increased dramatically due to our lifestyles of unhealthy diets, and amazing Malaysian food, and we have seen that NCDs account for more than 70% of these deaths in our country including deaths of Covid-19 where 80% of it was due to patients with underlying NCDs. NCDs is a time bomb. Many live for decades without knowing they have undiagnosed NCD trace factors and direct and indirect costs of treating late-stage diseases such as cancer and kidney diseases. This has increased in our country and has to be recognized. There must be more significant urgency in investment and, of course, focused on combating NCDs and this goes beyond the health sector, requiring multi sectoral' effort.
- The second issue is the silent pandemic, which is mental health. We need to focus on social economic inequalities in mental health. High rates of death and suicide, depressive and anxiety symptoms indicate the apparent deterioration of mental health. This has severe impact, especially on long term to the costs of our health care system and human productivity. On a local SDG level, we should increase, train and empower community mental health champions aka "community gatekeepers" so that this important focus is translated on a local level. While there is a triage of mental health help, at least on the lowest level in the community, we have mental health champions so people know where to go to.
- Women and maternal health, including psychosexual, reproductive impacts on human health are essential issues that we need to focus upon it. Even in my area, we have noticed that women, especially from the lower-income areas, may lack access to proper health care, including reproductive healthcare and contraception. And, they may have exposure to even domestic violence that affects their mental and physical health. The universal lockdown that we have experienced has exacerbated these inaccessibility of proper healthcare, leading to some unsafe abortions and limited accessibility to proper contraception and family planning methods, particularly in lower income communities.
- Covid-19 has exposed gaps in our system. Need to have more conversations and rethink the healthcare system including activating a united healthcare network reflecting a shared responsibility approach by everyone. Health should be a focus in all policies, and not just in Ministry of Health.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 2

Panelist 3: Dr. Murallitharan Munusamy (Director, National Cancer Society Malaysia)



Topic: Issues raised

- We submitted a 70-page report as part of the process. One of the big things that NGOs find to be a big challenge on the ground is the indicators for SDGs especially in healthcare, are located in the national level. These are big data collection agencies giving a wholesome picture of national progress but for example daerah Hulu Selangor, no one's bothered to look at how well it is doing. I shudder to even think about certain regions of Sarawak and whether is data even captured from those regions, their rural districts, and all that. So as much as we like to see national progress across the different SDGs particularly for the indicators in health, there are a lot of concerns from our colleagues working in small places in the ground that the indicators are not set and monitored on a district level.
- One of the problems is with SDG 3 in terms of progress; we see that this concept of leaving no one behind could be done so much better. Especially with vulnerable groups, especially single mothers, groups of a different gender persuasion for those from lower social income groups, migrants and refugees are sets of people who have very little access to the overall healthcare system. A formal healthcare cannot cater to this last mile of providing healthcare and we know equity has much expensive. The reality the cost of providing equity is always going to be expensive, and it's very impractical, and unfair tonput that burden onto a formal healthcare system. Usually last mile served by CSOs, NGOs. Need to engage and involve them.

Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

- We need political will for some reason, Dr. Rozita worked with various teams over decades, and it's possible to propose so many brilliant innovations to the system. Because of no political will, the proposed stay at the paper
- Currently, we exist in silos because whatever services we are providing are not part of the formal healthcare system nor bridging mechanism into the overall delivery and provision of services for the healthcare systems. We need to take this opportunity afforded by COVID-19 and stimulate this permanent change
- Haven't transitioned into a health system that can cope with NCDs – manpower, cost wise. Seems to be an endless pit. Need a transformational approach to healthcare.
- NGOs need to work with the national healthcare system as evidenced during Covid-19 period.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 2

Panelist 4: Dr. Khor Swee Kheng (Associate Fellow, Global Health Programme, Chatham House) (1/2)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

Voluntary Reviews are Part of Global Accountability

- A voluntary review is an initial step. There is something called an unconsented review, so voluntary reviews are the lowest tier in global accountability mechanisms: Malaysia National SDG Council and the Steering Committee with six working committees. Inclusivity well, being, and so on, but health cuts across all of them and perhaps cannot be siloed only in the wellbeing working committee. Like our comments in the first session this morning about poverty, the VNR process for Malaysia for health must be integrated with Malaysia plans.

Topic: Issues raised

1. Statistics are Necessary, but an Imperfect Guide

- Malaysia achieves this SDG indicator. We've got excellent news, especially in maternal mortality rate, infant mortality rate, malaria, and tobacco. But these SDG goals and targets are minimum stands.
- If we've achieved these SDGs, so perhaps Malaysia should rely on higher standards so desired standards, like OECD standards or a basket of peer upper-middle-income countries, so that could be a better target.

2. Emerging Health Issues in Malaysia

- The out-of-pocket payments in Malaysia has increased to 40% of total health expenditure and WHO recommendation is 20%. This causes catastrophic health payments and bankruptcy. AKPK agency, an agency of Bank Negara Malaysia, estimates that 18% to 20% of people go bankrupt because of health reasons or health spending.
- There are few things not covered by VNR. The distribution of health professionals, the increasing role of private. How do we measure the resilience of public health and public health care and these are separate things. Doing an endemic COVID-19 for multiple years and also doesn't capture aging issues.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 2

Panelist 4: Dr. Khor Swee Kheng (Associate Fellow, Global Health Programme, Chatham House) (2/2)



Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

1. Endemic COVID-19

- Firstly, is to consider endemic COVID is to occur. So, we're fighting a triple burden of care essentially. We're fighting COVID-19 with delivering routine COVID-19 care, and we're delivering overall public health, at least until 2024. So now SDG will be impacted a question for all of us, do we need a COVID target or an indicator for SDG 3 Malaysia requires?
- Political stability for health is essential. Therefore, excellent coordination between health professionals and political leaders is vital and key to achieving SDG3 and COVID-19 management.
- Immolation alone is not enough, as we've all agreed that organizational changes in rearranging the government a little bit may be necessary for effective coordination. For example, in China, health is so vital that it is one of only three commissions, the other being security there, the third one is economic development.
- Health should be an indicator of national development as par with a Gross Domestic Production (GDP)

2. Health Systems – Six Building Blocks

- The first one is human capital. As in the contract, the system needs to be resolved. The maldistribution of doctors between rural areas and the urban parts of Malaysia needs to be resolved and the retention of doctors so we don't lose them to the private sector to other countries.
- There is no perfect mix in health care delivery, but we'll have to find the right mix for Malaysia between preventive and curative, and here's a terrible one. We spend 10% of our total health expenditure on preventive and 70% on curatives.
- To tertiary care like University Hospitals and GHL in financing to diversify the sources of funds and increase the accountability for the users of funds, we need better procurement for all the vaccines, medicines, and technologies out there and more.
- Option portable lifetime electronic health records to know what's going on in health terms, at least for populations and in terms of leadership and governance.
- They were potentially removing Ministry of Health conflicts of interest because they are standard-setter and regulators by payer-provider and sometimes asset owners through other government agencies. There's also a need for decentralization of health decisions.
- It's within the VNR process, but also outside of it because VNR is only capturing one part of our progress; it is to have long term health reforms that begin with creating a health reform Commission through an Act of Parliament
- This health Commission is responsible for the steady-state management of the health system, including setting strategy and standards and managing human capital. Thus, emulation becomes a regulator.
- Policy sector also delivers public health. And then, we can have hospital trusts and a network of general practitioners and primary care practitioners to become the health care providers. This could exist alongside VNR as well as outside of it

Q&A Session – Session 2 (1/3)

No	Question	Answer
1	<p>At present, how are the SDGs guiding the Government, particularly the Ministers who are now making policies that are directly impacting the <i>rakyat</i>? Is there a Commission that is pushing for these at this critical time?</p>	<p>Dr. Khor Swee Kheng: On paper, an SDG Commission Council is checked by the right honorable Prime Minister of Malaysia. So that's on paper, and there are six working groups. As I've described in my presentation earlier, health is in one of those working groups, the wellbeing working groups. But because health is so cross-cutting, it should. So probably be involved in the other five working groups as well.</p> <p>My second comment is about the voluntary nature of DNR and the fact that it takes place every three to four years. So, the actual duration is not specified by the United Nations, but I think it takes place every three to four years, so there could be more. Tactical things that need to happen. For example, weekly cabinet meetings every Wednesday. Second, the Rancangan Malaysia plans that EPU anchors them and thirdly, the National Recovery Council.</p> <p>Dr. Rozita Halina Tun Hussein: There are already government structures that monitor the at a higher level and the different line-item ministries you know also monitored by. But I go back to Dr. Khor's earlier presentation for Malaysia. I think a lot of the SDG indicators have exceeded them.</p>
2	<p>Again and again, we hear how unaffordable high-quality healthcare can be, particularly to the middle and lower-income households, let alone the underserved and vulnerable population. I have also just heard how an old lady checked herself into a private hospital for a certain ailment, only to find out that Covid-19 and her bill came to 43k, which she can't afford, and the community has raised funds for her. Both VNR reports of 2017 and 2021 mentioned exploring healthcare financing alternatives and solutions as a way forward.</p> <p>Would you care to elaborate on this from the government's perspective?</p>	<p>Dr. Rozita Halina Tun Hussein: We talk about the efficiency of health care, I think, and this will be highly unpopular, I think with many people for me to say this, but the efficiency of health care is really in the public sector. That's where we gain a lot, and now I apologize. But unfortunately, I don't have my usual slides to compare the funding for healthcare both, which goes to the public sector and the private sector, and the actual utilization and delivery of health care within the two sectors.</p>

Q&A Session – Session 2 (2/3)

No	Question	Answer
3	How does care for the environment contribute to good health, wellbeing, and sustainable development?	<p>YB Dr. Kelvin Yii Lee Wuen: WHO has estimated 25% of the disease burden in all developing worlds due to environmental factors. This is something that we need to address, especially in preparation for future pandemics. Because, as I mentioned, even just on my pronunciation with climate change, this is a catalyst for even more zooming. Think infections to come into our community and society.</p> <p>Focusing on health as a department and ministry or one sector has to be an equal system, and its ecosystem covers everything. For example, many health issues on rural people are due to a lack of necessities and I'll give you every obvious example. Patients, dialysis patients, peritoneal dialysis patients when they go back to their villages. Sometimes they don't have a stable water supply and stuff like that, so they have to go through to take a bath to the reverse water being contaminated and not the clean source. Sometimes you get an infection, peritonitis, and then you get other complications so and so forth. So, it has to be a healthcare ecosystem. We need to look at health, not just one single factor, but the whole ecosystem.</p> <p>Dr. Murallitharan M: I think we're doing well for about 60 -70% of the population and were doing well at providing them. With the kind of access and quality of healthcare that is adequate now, we need to bridge the resources that we have abundantly in the private sector, which is very underutilized. We've got a lot of resources that are siloed away in the private sector. I suppose I need to move into the site into oversight rather than as functioning on the ground as providers. We'll never be able to cover that last 30% of our population, and it's not only in terms of the geographical disparities we talked about. There's a massive amount of geographical disparity that cannot be denied.</p>
4	I think there is a good idea to establish the Health Reform Commission. Would this be something EPU and MASA would advocate?	<p>Dr. Khor Swee Kheng: We have done multiple reforms and by my count or 16 to 20 attempts in the last 40 years. The previous reform involves an external people, consultant not by MOH. The right way is to create a parliamentary act of Parliament, outperform Commission responsible and accountable to Parliament. So, ministers come and go. But the Reform Commission stays until their job is done. And then they hand it over health Commission, no more reforms after that because we can't continually reform the system.</p> <p>Dr. Rozita Halina Tun Hussein: I agreed with what Dr. Khor Swee Kheng mentioned. We need someone in the health commission or another reform community who understands the health need, especially the equitable issues in the health care system.</p>

Q&A Session – Session 2 (3/3)

No	Question	Answer
5	<p>Non-citizen children born overseas to either parent Malaysian do not have access to Government Health care at the same rate as Malaysians. There is also the intersectionality that some of these children are physically challenged or require long-term medical treatment. Many of them are single mothers and have challenges paying for the healthcare of their non-Malaysian children; when will there be inclusivity in not leaving them behind under SDG3?</p>	<p>Dr. Khor Swee Kheng: I think there could be two things here that we need to think about as a system solution. One is a durable solution at the intersection between immigration and, shall we say, non-citizens' rights. Some of us are in civil societies, have written a proposal called non-citizens. So systemic solution, a durable systemic solution is a consultation or some elect partnership with the immigration authorities and the Home, Ministry, and National Security Council to resolve this issue.</p> <p>The second systemic solution right there can be multiple short terms and long term small and big. The safety net that includes NGOs should not be the first part, of course. As for the majority of people, entries are outstanding, shall we say, at filling in the gaps or where governments are cannot go, and no government in the world will ever be able to go and fill every gap in society</p> <p>YB Dr. Kelvin Yii Lee Wuen: This involves a political issue because I understand that many of these children are Malaysians born to Malaysia's parents, and there is a. Constitutional inequality, let's put it in a federal constitution that does this so. So again, there has to be some political way which I am personally very supportive of. A reform to give equal and equitable treatment to both gender and also for children.</p>

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 3

Moderator: Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Sulaiman Mahbob (Board of Trustee MASA)



Moderator's Introduction

This Session shall be on Chapter 4 of the VNR Report, which carries the title of INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH. This covers two SDG goals which are SDG8 – Decent Work & Economic Growth and SDG10 – Reduced Inequalities. Yesterday we discussed in great depth how Covid-19 had impacted poverty and healthcare. Today we shall discuss the impact to our economy on how the lockdowns have caused enormous disruptions to businesses and livelihoods and review the VNR 2021 Report on the issues raised and moving forward recommendations.

Moderator's Closing Remarks

Speakers have performed well on articulating the concerns in Chapter 4. Mr. Kon spoke very well on the green economy and Orang Asli. As an economist, I agree with Dr. Jamal – we need to have other measurements beyond GDP - to use other dimensions – and we now have the Shared Prosperity Vision. YB Fahmi spoke on the importance of data and getting suitable measures. EPU in RMK12 incorporated some of these concerns, but because of Covid-19, RMK12 has been deferred. So Covid has impacted our progress thus far.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 3

Panelist 1: Mr. Azlan Abdul Rashid (Director, Equity Development Division of Economic Planning Unit) (1/3)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

SDG 8

- The presentation started with SDG 8, and we notice the COVID-19 has impacted the economy, so we are required to review the status and achievement. We focus on addressing all these concerns and ensuring that there are equal opportunities for all. In prospect of the economy, our economy expanded an average of 2.3% per annum from 2017 to 2020. This growth has to stretch translated the GDP per capita of about 41,151 In 2020. The growth rate of GDP per capita for the past three years in 2019 is 4%, which is considered higher than other major economies.
- This achievement of our economy is mainly driven by 3 key sectors: manufacturing, services, and agriculture. Instead of the progress of the shared prosperity, we have recorded expanding our economic growth and creating job opportunities. This is shown with an expanded by 3.3% growth job creation in the labor market between 2017 to 2020. The labor market added 470 900 new jobs to the economy. The wage also grew during that period from RM2879 in 2017 to RM3324 in 2019. During this period, the minimum wage was also revised twice, around RM1000 to RM1200.
- Malaysia is promoting inclusive growth to the expansion of SMEs through digitalization. SMEs are the backbones of the economy, contributing almost 39% of GDP in 2019 and employed about half of employment in Malaysia. The government has allocated almost RM2.9 billion to employer SMEs and spurred the incredibly upcoming industry revolution
- The grant will mainly focus on leveling up the SMEs via training, grant, soft loan, and tax exemptions. In addition, the government launched in February 2021 the measurement to digital economy called Malaysia Digital Economic Blueprint with a mission to become a digital leader in the region. The government has committed to this plan by investing RM4.6 billion through PPP. This investment will provide a better digital infrastructure, improve connectivity, especially in the rural area, and support growth for the future.

SDG 10

- During the 11th Malaysia plan, the government targeted the median income of the B40 to increase from RM2629 in 2014 to RM3,166 in 2019. These plans also introduced a Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) to calculate poverty beyond the income dimension. The MPI probability measures four dimensions: income, education, the standard of living, and health.
- However, there are some challenges in the 11th plan progress. In 2019, the B40 income share decreased 16.0% from 16.4% in 2016. The median income B40 grew marginally by 1.8% from 2016 to 2019. The inequity has widened progress with the GINI coefficient increase from 0.399 in 2016 to 0.407 in 2019. The Government spent RM70.2 billion between 2016 to 2019 on income improvement and assistance to close the income gap. These government spending Included cash assistance, scholarship allocations, and educational assistance for the B40 group. The middle income or M40 benefited from cash subsidy programs during the pandemic. In inclusive turnover growth, the government has committed to making sure that growth inclusive and the woman is benefited for all and make sure that everybody is left behind. The government provided specific allocation for the minority and vulnerable groups, Orang Asli, and disabled communities. The government also allocated a budget for education, health, and housing for socioeconomic development.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 3

Panelist 1: Mr. Azlan Abdul Rashid (Director, Equity Development Division of Economic Planning Unit) (2/3)



Topic: Issues raised

SDG 8

- There are still several changes that may impede the progress in achieving their goals. First, one of the challenges that we are facing is that the economy is not expected to grow as robust as well. Our GDP growth grew at an as much slower pace between 2017 and 2019 at about 5% per annum than the previous five years before, which is true about 5% per annum. And second, growth must be inclusive and make sure that everybody is benefited from our economic development. 47% of Malaysia's GDP is constricted in three major cities: Federal Territory Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, and Pulau Pinang. Also, the gap between rich and poor states continues to widen.
- The third problem is the problem in the labor market. Our industry relies on low-cost foreign labour and we need to increase our productivity, provide better job opportunities, and create high-quality jobs. Also, the Human Capital index ranked 55 out of 157 countries and scored about 0.2%. This shows Malaysia is lagging in developing its human capital.

SDG 10

- First, the income class gap is widened, and there is a disparity between income groups. There is also a gap between states with distribution between ethnicity as well as different income classes. And it's shown that the trend has widened over the past few years. For example, the absolute gap between the T20 and B40 has widened from RM10,148 in 2016 to RM11,869 in 2019. The growth rate of the B40 income is also the lowest compared to the other income. Between 2016 and 2019, B40 medium-income grew, only 1.8% compared to the growth in income of M40, which grew about 4.1%, and the top 20 groups, which grew about 4.6%.
- The second issue is the high wealth inequality and persist. For example, depositors over ASB reported that almost 9% of ASB depositors own almost 40% of the proper saving. In EPF, about 20% of its members own almost 45-75% of total savings. This indicates the issues of equity and wealth inequality persist. The other issue is basic amenities gaps. Some states and remote areas are still consistently facing the quality of water, access to electricity, and connectivity of the internet. This is the main issue that needs to solve to make economic development inclusive. The evidence suggests that the equality between women and men in a household is a substantial contributing factor to overall income inequality in society.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 3

Panelist 1: Mr. Azlan Abdul Rashid (Director, Equity Development Division of Economic Planning Unit) (3/3)



Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

SDG 8

- First, we have to ensure that a better *rakyat's* livelihood can improve basic health and nutrition. We can also see our learning outcomes and more science and Technology (STEM) aspect.
- Second, we have to invest more in human capital, including creating high-quality and high-paying jobs to ensure that everybody benefits from our economic development. Child nutrition is the key to move to enhance the lifecycle approach.
- Third, there is a need to improve child and elderly care provision by increasing female labor force participation in our labor market. To ensure that women could re-enter the labor market, our labor market needs to provide a flexible working arrangement to encourage them to re-enter the market labor market. And also, we need to improve by or to promote and resolve the glass ceiling issues. Fourth, we could work compensation for employees. We need to increase the compensation of employees to GDP, which is currently relatively low compared to other our regions.

SDG 10

- The government has to make sure that growth is inclusive and ensure that everybody is benefited from our economic development. Thus, the government needs to address some issues for a way forward. The first key to address is the rising cost of living. Therefore, the government needs to increase the purchasing power and strengthen social protection. Second, the government needs to enhance shared prosperity by expanding educational access to *rakyat* and digitalization to ensure that everybody benefits from the current trend and promotes high-quality job opportunities via domestic and foreign industry players' investment.
- Lastly, the government needs to safeguard our resiliency livelihood. The government needs to invest in a greener and more inclusive development, and we need to do something with fiscal policy. The government needs to reform our labor market, strengthen the social safety net, and make sure that no one left behind. The Government has to leverage on their digital technology to make sure that everybody can do business online.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 3

Panelist 2: YB Tuan Ahmad Fahmi Fadzil (Member of APPGM-SDG & MP of Lembah Pantai)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

- I look forward to Parliament resuming next week. The “S” in SDG now, unfortunately, is no longer sustainable but survivable.

Topic: Issues raised

- The current statistic provided by the Department of Statistics is that in May of 2021, the unemployment rate is at about 4.5%, which is a lagging indicator. The uncertainties around economic sectors, whether their operation’s opening or remaining shut and workplace and factory cluster impact to the COVID-19 cases. We may see a higher proportion of people losing jobs. In terms of mental health, Malaysian DG health highlighted in the first three months of this year that the number of commit suicide is equivalent to people who committed suicide as it was half of last year. Mental health also affects the quality of employment and employability. He also mentioned that people have been asking for work and asking to take them on in his office for work. When discussed reducing inequality. It's exceptionally worrying when we're reminded that in terms of EPF saving, there is some discussion right now regarding gig workers. A lot of people look to the gig economy. The discussion shows are focus on gig workers who do not get adequate social protection, such as SOCSO. Most gig workers ride their motorbike, but the system does not cover raider protection, especially when an accident happens.
- Another point, which is also extremely worrying, is about not only many SMEs that have been suffering or have chosen to close down their business but also many people who've been employed previously. They may have been earning several RM1000 a month. The cutback has been so severe that they only earn barely 10% of what they used to earn. The most critical point is data. We talk about SDG's veracity and how up-to-date the data is; it's critical to make sure that people protect workers and reduce income inequality. These targets are met, and changes can be made, but specifically in the here in the now, right here. Right now, these families are trying to survive day to day, month by month. Detailed data can be collected by agencies and shared with MPs as MPs are on the ground.
- Another critical point was Inter-Ministerial and agency resistance to sharing data to achieve various goals, including SVG. Once attended a town hall session by APPGM, there was little conversation between agencies and duplication. In terms of the macro approach, in March of this year, Parliament was supposed to have discussed, debated, and passed the 12th Malaysia plan, but that has been delayed until September 2021. There have been calls by economists to review the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 to determine if targets and the aims are still relevant, given that it was first raised in 2019.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 3

Panelist 3: Mr. Kon Onn Sein (Director, Yayasan Kajian Dan Pembangunan Masyarakat & OA Organics) (1/2)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

- Natural capital contributes about 47 per cent of the natural wealth. Swiss Re Institutes(2020) claimed that about 55 per cent of the global GDP depends on nature. Indigenous people made of 6 per cent of the global population. They are managing 25 per cent of the planet surface area and care for 80 per cent of earth biodiversity. This makes them the best partners in sustaining biodiversity and planet. It is important to note that deforestation is five times higher outside of the indigenous territories. This also means that deforestation is five times slower in places where the indigenous people are staying. A longitudinal study done in Nepal from 2000 – 20210) also shows community-forest management can reduce 37 per cent of deforestation and 4.3 per cent of poverty, relatively. These previous studies establish a fact that the indigenous people and Orang Asli (OA) play a significant role in slowing down climate change and in conserving the environment for the better of all.
- Relatively, the large contribution of natural capital also suggests the important potential of green economy. The components for green economy are natural farming and fruits orchards. These economic activities will enable the OA to increase their income from RM2,000 to RM4,000. The increment in household income will enable their affordability of food, housing, clothes and education. Subsequently, they will have better capabilities to sustaining the environment through agro-forestry approach and strengthening the culture and community cohesion.
- Through the initiatives for establishing the green economic practices, many trainings have been conducted with the OA with the funding from the Ministry of Finance. We connect them to fair market, taught them how to do packing and processing, finally get to higher value. From 2016 to date, the farms have grown from 14 to 60 farmers. About 10 per cent of them are earning between RM1,500 to RM2,400, 20 per cent are between RM800 – RM 1,200 and 70 per cent are between RM100 – RM 800. Their income levels are determined by different reasons such as health, age and other priorities of multi-tasking and different capabilities. Through the intervention they are able to buy washing machines, extend the house, scaling up the farms and created better social cohesion. Now they are building the capacity t reforest their lands.
- In the VNR, there are many policies recommendations for the green economy initiatives. For example, a box article in the VNR, highlighted the community forest and economic fiscal transfer (EFT), which has also been highlighted in the Eleventh Malaysian Plan (2016-2020), particularly the mention of community forestry and involvement of the indigenous people and local communities in its recommendation. There is also the National Entrepreneurship Policy 2030 aims for the development of an inclusive and competitive entrepreneurial community including SMEs, B40 groups, and social entrepreneurs. In this policy there is an emphasis on social entrepreneurship, social enterprise, and community-based economic activities. ... as drivers to inclusive socio-economic development.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 3

Panelist 3: Mr. Kon Onn Sein (Director, Yayasan Kajian Dan Pembangunan Masyarakat & OA Organics) (2/2)



Topic: Issues raised

- Nevertheless, there are still gaps that need to be addressed. For instance, there is a lack of integration and coordination and streamline this whole process establishing the community-based managed forestry and green economy in one direction. It is noteworthy that the state cannot gazette the forest as the OA Reserved because it needs its revenue for logging concession. In 2019, the Ministry of Finance created the economic fiscal transfer (EFT) of RM60 million for the state to protect the forest. However, the EFT does not oblige the state to engage OA as partners in sustaining the forest. As a result, the EFT does not work far enough in developing a green economy in a more sustainable manner. Nonetheless, it is important to note that the natural resources contribute 55 per cent of the GDP, and the economic potential of the green economy is far exceeding the logging royalty which was recorded at RM1.2 billion in 2019.

Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

- Therefore, as a way forward, one of the recommendations is to set up the community-based managed forestry. The government can incentivise the state finance to start up and manage a community based managed forest. With the EFT, the state needs to go a bit further by partnering with the OA to sustain the forest. The government should also invest more on green technology and digital access. These initiatives will contribute to the GDP and taxes to the Federal Government which can then feed back to the incentives for the state to further protect the forest.
- The green economy is not only for compensating the OA for their services in protecting the forestry. It will also benefit the local communities by providing clean air and water, micro-climates for better agro-culture. It will help to improve the sustainability of land and essential irrigation. It will slow down the deforestation, sustaining public goods and improving risk management. It will improve socio-economic conditions of the OA and local communities by creating more job opportunities and wealth. This will then reduce expenditure that are inter-related to the poverty such as social welfare hand-outs. This is a sustainable economic model that will generate revenue for the Federal Trust Funds as green economy is generally recognised as national capital that are essential in contributing to the GDP.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 3

Panelist 4: Prof. Dr. Jamal Othman (Deputy Chairman, Akademi Profesor Malaysia & Senior Fellow MASA)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

- It is important to have the right data and measurements.

Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

- Data collection enables us to have a better measurement of wealth and income disparity. Conventionally, income disparity has been measured through the GD co-efficiency that reflects income distribution or income disparity. Malaysia needs a better measurement to reflect wealth disparity across different ethnic groups and intra ethnic groups. For example, the number of absolute poor based on new PLI (<B1 income) is about 6% which is very significant (poverty rates used to be about 0.5%). We need to closely monitor this rate with absolute poverty statistics because the high rate is a considerable concern. This will enable various assistance, especially under the current pandemic situation, to the targeted group. With a measurement by using the absolute term, it will ensure the effectiveness of the assistance for the targeted poor.
- The current measurements are based on income class levels in general. The needs for better data collection are in parallel with the need for a mechanism to identify target groups. An improved mechanism will enable the identification of targeted groups with absolute terms and criteria (e.g., absolute PLI). This mechanism will be beneficial during the economic crisis.
- Developing the mechanism for identifying the specific target group also entails expanding the current economic data collection practices to go beyond GDP indicators. While the GDP is designed to reflect the economic and marketed goods, it is not meant to measure genuine progress. For example, the median income for B40 is not growing well. It shows that the group has become worst off in terms of equity. If we adopt the General Progress Indicator (GPI), it will show that the B40 group in terms of their monetary welfare is lower than the U20 group. So far, there is no measurement of how the equity has gone down for the various class. The GDP cannot be used to measure that. Beyond the GDP, the genuine progress indicator will be very useful to measure the economy, social and ecology in one unified measure.
- Equality, whether in income or wealth, is the most critical indicator for SDG. It is essential to look at the taxation regime, such as the GST or VAT, as an approach. It should also be accompanied by progressive taxation. We need to consider capital gain and inheritance tax. The reform in the taxation regime will help to improve income and wealth equality.
- There is yet a related national statistic on the waqf assets that we have, how they can be turned into a source of economic empowerment. For example, there are billions of ringgit of waqf assets. However, so far, the public is yet to see which is waqf assets. There is a need for the waqf assets to be shown to the public through labelling. It is owned by the community at large and not by government agencies. The public will be made more compelled to contribute to waqf.
- Income flow, usually measured by the Social Accounting Matrix (SAM), is significant. Nonetheless, Malaysia is not punctual in producing this SAM. It should be updated at least twice every five years. Another data collection mechanism that requires improvement is the under-employment data. The current terms for under-employment should include the working hours and intersect with the qualifications of the workers. There is also a need for data collection for increasing the gig economy in the country. The data will help in formulating policies and measures for protecting the gig workers.

Q&A Session – Session 3 (1/2)

No	Question	Answer
1	<p>Its good to see that reduction of gender inequality as an aspect for the way forward. Has the EPU developed targets and indicators for the reduction of gender inequality in the area of inclusive economic growth.</p>	<p>Mr. Azlan: Currently, female LFP is 55-56%. In the 12th Malaysian Plan EPU to target to increase the female LFP from 55% to 59% in the next 4-5 years. The planning from the EPU include flexible working hours for women to enter labour market. We also encourage employer to provide childcare facilities at their workplace. We also encourage home-based economic activities for women to do businesses and related work at their home. To achieve gender equality, the government is reviewing related law to ensure that women are better off and better protected in the civil and Syariah laws. In the government, we are trying to increase the number of women in the higher-level policy making positions by at least 20 per cent. Currently, the number of women in the high-level position is increasing, though we have not achieved the 20 per cent yet.</p>
2	<p>Position of the migrant workers which seems to be left behind? We know that there are foreign workers who are unregistered in the country. How do the government acknowledge their roles and ensure that they are well treated by our companies and systems?</p>	<p>Mr. Azlan: Related to the issue of foreign workers' welfare and security, the government is currently trying to enforce the Akta 466, to ensure that the employer provide at least a minimum standard of living, housing and accommodations and amnesties, good living standard conditions for the foreign workers. The government wants to protect the welfare of the foreign workers under the employment act. We ensure that the country and companies comply with the standards. The government will also enforce stricter protections for the wellbeing and welfare of the foreign workers.</p>

Q&A Session – Session 3 (2/2)

No	Question	Answer
3	<p>What are the hindrances for Malaysia to achieve the long-term targets in the SDGs?</p>	<p>Prof. Jamal: Looking back of the planning over the years since our first Rancangan Malaysia, the basic criterion to measure the progress, the material aspects of our economy are by using the GDP. While the GDP remain essential in measuring the size of the economy, certainly, we also want to measure to what extend our GDP has grown, we are also saying the type of the processes that the GDP that we undertook to obtain the GDP growth rate. Those processes may not actually be sustainable. For example, reliant on FDP, to some extent is sensible, but to depend on FDP to measure the economic growth will create distortion and unsustainable. To rely on foreign workers, since Independence, we are relying on external factors such cheap foreign workers is unsustainable. It is timely to consider the best way forward for Malaysian people, whether to continue focusing on the growth of GDP or the improvement of wellbeing and welfare (kesejahteraan). To improve welfare, there is a need for a right measurement for welfare to have the right consensus of achieving the right thing. To improve wellbeing is not at the expense of the growth of the GDP. First and foremost, it should be made clear, and a consensus should be reached on what should be the emphasis, and the GDP will be able to capture that.</p> <p>MR. Kon Onn Sein: One of the issues is coordination and integration. Malaysia has many policies, but these policies are acting in silo within one and another. There is a need for a streamlining of all the policies and objectives. For example, for OA, there are policies to move Malaysia forward to address climate change and uplift the OA from poverty and increase productions for the country. EFT is under CAPSA (the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture). CAPSA have little influence on the state. Ultimately, the state has the jurisdiction to gazette land and forest reserved and to engage with the OA. CAPSA has very little leverage with the state government. Even CAPSA give incentives to the state to gazette to compensate for the loss of logging concession, it is not able to bring and engage with the OA as partner to develop the green economy. There is another department – JAKOA – which is supposed to be responsible, but due to understaffed and under-resourced, JAKOA is lacking the capacities to develop OA capabilities to develop the green economy, which requires infrastructure and digital connectivity. Unless all the different agencies, state players and stakeholders play the role and coordinate together with the policies, the long-term targets can be achieved.</p> <p>Mr. Azlan: The government requires cooperation from everybody. The government needs the bottom-up approach and support from other parties, including the private sectors and CSO. We need to engage more to understand the situation on the ground.</p>

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 4

Moderator: Ms. Zara Phang (Green Economy Analyst, WWF Malaysia & Fellow MASA)



Moderator's Introduction

- The moderator introduced Session 4 which discussed Chapter 5 of Malaysia's VNR 2021 report, titled "Sustainability and Climate Change". The two goals covered in this chapter are SDG12: Responsible Consumption and Production and SDG13: Climate Action.
- The moderator started the session by flashing a couple of images to illustrate her points. The world is grappling with the health and economic impacts of Covid-19 pandemic that threatens health and well-being of everybody. However, there are series of progressively larger threats looming, notably "Climate Change" and "Biodiversity Collapse". This serve as potent reminder that however bad our immediate troubles are, the worst is yet to come.
- The latest impacts of climate change are manifested by ongoing extreme weather events in several parts of the world. This include massive floods and landslide in several countries in parts of Europe, India, Japan and China as well as heat waves and wildlife in United States. The moderator stresses that impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss may not be as imminent as Covid-19. But they will impact mankind on a larger scale, if necessary, steps are not taken.
- The moderator highlighted resources efficiency challenges faced in Malaysia, citing few alarming statistics:
 1. 22,793 tonnes of food are wasted daily, not accounting resources to produce and transport the food, with many people remain hungry.
 2. 0.94 million tonnes of mismanaged plastic waste annually, where 1/3 ended up in the ocean;
 3. 4 million tonnes of hazardous wastes are produced in 2019; and
 4. At least four major water supply disruption episodes in Klang Valley in 2019 due to pollution.

Moderator's Closing Remarks

- The moderator stressed the importance of achieving SDG 12 and SDG 13 in addressing the aforementioned issues and challenges lied ahead. SDG13 addresses both the causes and effects of climate change, including mainstreaming climate change into national policies, strategies and planning. SDG12 focus on consumption and production for a Green Economy. Since economic activities are major drivers of environmental degradation, success of SDG 12 will help Malaysia to develop a pathway towards economy and society that can avert worsts of disasters, less polluting, more resource-efficient and more resilient to future climate change and biodiversity loss. Success of these goals are crucial to ensure well-being of Malaysians.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 4

Panelist 1: Dr. K. Nagulendran (Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of Environment) (1/2)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

- Dr Nagu said the VNR Report is an exemplary of ‘whole of nation’ approach through several multi-stakeholder dialogues in developing the document.
- He then introduced the Ministry of Environment and Water (KASA), a newly formed Ministry in 2020. KASA jurisdiction covers “brown” environmental issues (as opposed to KeTSA “green” issues and MAFI “blue” issues). The Ministry also manage whole spectrum of water sector except in rural areas. Dr Nagu stated the four-pronged strategies by KASA under the umbrella of Environmental Sustainability in Malaysia 2020-2030 which are 1) Empowered Government, 2) Green Growth , 3) Strategic Collaboration and 4) Social Inclusiveness.
- Many ongoing and planned initiatives under KASA complement the Sustainable Development Goals. Several key examples are listed below:
 1. Majlis Air Negara and Climate Action Council (MyCAC) that are both chaired by the Prime Minister. The later had their first meeting on 13 April 2021.
 2. Meeting of Ministers of the Environment (MEXCOE) which is a platform consist of KASA, state EXCOs, Environment Ministry of Sabah and Sarawak. The committee discuss environmental issues and facilitate mainstreaming of climate action across federal-state level.
 3. Roadmap Towards Zero Single-Use Plastics 2018-2030 which received support from several State governments. To complement this roadmap, Circular Economy Roadmap to circularise plastic waste is being developed with World Bank and expected to launch by Oct 2021.
 4. Carbon Market Guidance document is being developed with Ministry of Finance. This will set the cap and trade mechanism in putting a price on carbon.
 5. Long Term Low Emission Development Strategy that will set Malaysia on low carbon trajectory, reflected by various plans in the pipeline such as National Low Carbon Cities Masterplan and Low Carbon Mobility Blueprint.
 6. Review of the National Climate Change Policy 2009. Currently, the National Environment Policy 2002 is also under review.
 7. National Adaptation Plan is being developed by securing funds from Green Climate Fund (GCF).
- Dr Nagu noted that Malaysia is not a stranger to sustainable development since the country took strong measures to address environmental issues decades ago. The document of Third Malaysia Plan in 1996 captured the tenets of sustainable development. Several legislations were formed such as Environmental Quality Act 1974 and Protection of Wildlife Act 1972.
- Dr Nagu reiterates Malaysia’s pledge that was in 1992 Rio Earth Summit to maintain at least 50% of her land area under forest and tree cover. While the VNR reported this commitment, it didn’t include the term “tree cover”.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 4

Panelist 1: Dr. K. Nagulendran (Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of Environment) (2/2)



Topic: Issues raised

- The VNR Report does not cover SDG 14: Life Below Water and SDG 15: Life on Land. However, both are important to complement climate actions and sustainability. Recent reports by IPCC and IPBES mentioned climate change and biodiversity nexus needs to be addressed together, where previously are compartmentalised and addressed in silo manner even at international level. Compared to climate change which pose direct financial impacts, biodiversity have not received similar attention.
- As one of the megadiverse country, biodiversity is important in Malaysia. The country already lost the Sumatran rhino, and several majestic species may face similar fate, such as the Malayan tiger. Dr Nagu stressed that these are signals that urgent action is required. Climate action can provide complementary role to biodiversity loss. Similarly, biodiversity provide many solutions to address climate change since carbon emissions are absorbed by the ocean and terrestrial ecosystems.
- COVID-19 pandemic also triggered us to rethink on ways we measure our development. Malaysia needs new measurement of growth such as Inclusive Wealth Index. This measurement needs to be mainstreamed to provide 'true picture' of progress in terms of economy, environment and social.

Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

- In addition to KASA initiatives highlighted, Dr Nagu proposed various recommendations in advancing SDG 12 and 13:
 1. Implement market-based interventions for recourse mobilisation and policies implementation. For example, Penang State government collected RM 9 million annually from 20 cents charged for each plastic bag purchased at retail outlet. The money can be used to fund environmental initiatives.
 2. Scaling up nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches in Malaysia context. This include ethno-knowledge systems that can be leveraged from the Orang Asli.
 3. Mainstreaming of natural capital accounting which was planted in the 11th Malaysia Plan. Development projects need to consider value of biodiversity and ecosystem services.
 4. Environmental diplomacy to navigate the North-South dichotomy in accessing finance, technology transfer and capacity building from developed countries.
 5. Establish and mainstreaming new measurements of growth such as the Inclusive Wealth Index to paint a true development perspective.
 6. Cultivating behavioural change for better environment. KASA has several initiatives such as:
 7. Wakaf Air, a crowdfunding project to undertake water projects in rural areas to improve water quality.
 8. Program Denai Sungai Kebangsaan to encourage people using river trail as deterrent tor river pollution.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 4

Panelist 2: YB Tuan Wong Tack (Committee Member of APPGM-SDG & MP of Bentong)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

- YB Wong Tack opened his remarks by saying Chapter 5 of the VNR Report has many good ideas and suggestions. However, he raised general concern that the VNR report painted a positive outlook in Malaysia. This outlook risks downplaying the challenges and looming crisis ahead.

Topic: Issues raised

YB Wong Tack concerns centered on presence of political will and commitment to follow through on the recommendations in the VNR. These concerns stem from several cases of major environmental issues in Malaysia such as:

- Sharp increase in generation of hazardous waste from 1.5 million tonnes in 2015 to 4 million tonnes in 2019. Malaysia also continues to allow polluting industries to add to this increasing amount. For example, LYNAS generated more than a million ton of hazardous waste and nearly a million ton of radioactive wastes. These wastes are piling up at the sites.
- Water catchment areas still not gazetted across the country which poses water security risk. Development such as mining, logging, polluting industries (e.g. paper mill) are carried out in water catchment areas. There were proposals for development of scheduled and radioactive wastes disposal sites in water catchment areas.
- Ongoing destruction of Tasik Chini UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, a site dedicated for sustainable development learning.

There is also lack of urgency despite that “our house is on fire”, echoing message by environmental activists Greta Thurnbeg.

Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

- YB Won Tack said that government need to make hard decisions and drastic actions such as ban of logging, gazettement water catchment areas nationwide and conserving coastlines by mangrove planting. The government can also publish the demarcation of boundaries and acreage of 50% forested area to show accountability and transparency.
- There is need for realisation that we cannot go on business as usual and paradigm shift is required. Instead of focusing on mitigation, restricting, regulating impacts of destructive economic activities, Malaysia should phase out extractive and exploitative based economy and developing green economy with strict urgency. Unfortunately, the government through Minister of Natural Resources and Energy had announced plan to turn Malaysia into mineral hub due to estimated value of the country’s mineral resources at RM4.11 trillion. This pathway will upset the way forward for green economy.
- Everyone needs to empowered to realise this effort through “whole of nation approach’ and ‘no one left behind’. Malaysia needs to identify its competitive advantage and maximise the potential in charting new direction for green growth. For example, Malaysia’s geographical location at the equator provide lots of climate and environmental advantages.
- YB Wong Tack closed his remark by stressing that political will, mass participation and clean governance are required in building healthy environment for healthy society and economy.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 4

Panelist 3: Ms. Lavanya Rama Iyer (Head of Policy & Climate Change, WWF Malaysia) (1/2)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

- Ms. Lavanya congratulated EPU under Dato' Sri Mustapha Mohamad's leadership in adopting an open, transparent and inclusive stakeholder consultation process in preparing the VNR. Despite the short time (6 months), the VNR report is rich in content and documented variety of perspectives.
- The multi-stakeholder consultation process provided a valuable platform where government, academics, CSOs and corporates sits together. The process enabled them to raise and understand different concerns to produce a document that generally synthesis these concerns towards charting a way forward. EPU showed a genuine trust towards the stakeholders where full draft text of the report were shared for inputs and comments.
- Ms Lavanya commended EPU and team of consultants in raising SDG 17 for this process. She hoped that the momentum will continue with regular meetings of various clusters and working groups formed as part of governance structure under EPU that are well operationalised. Similarly, same level of open and transparent engagement in preparing the VNR should be continued in preparing other roadmaps, plans and processes in implementation by all government bodies.

Topic: Issues raised

- Ms. Lavanya focus her intervention on the recommendations and way forward since fellow panellists have elaborated on the general assessment of VNR Report. Her intervention is based on WWF's experience as part of EPU governing structure of SDG implementation and member of CSO-SDG Alliance and the APPGM-SDG.
- The issues raised by her are highlighted in the following sections together with the recommendation. This include degazettment of Permanent Reserved Forest (PRF), insufficient grassroots communities' participation and measurement of progress that centers on profit-oriented economy.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 4

Panelist 3: Ms. Lavanya Rama Iyer (Head of Policy & Climate Change, WWF Malaysia) (2/2)



Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

1. Nature should be integrated in all Goals and viewed as central in achieving the 2030 Agenda.

- Management of natural resources is integral in SDG 12 and SDG 13 progress since nature provided goods and ecosystem services. Furthermore, it's human disconnect with nature is the root causes of many current societal challenges including the existential climate crisis.
- While the VNR did not mention Nature-based Solutions (NbS), they should be emphasised more. Nature-based Solutions (NbS) are defined by IUCN as “actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits”.
- The societal challenges are already addressed in entire SDGs in leaving no behind by ensuring food and water security, building resilient to natural disasters and climate change and protecting human health. In addition, NbS such as forest protection and restoration enable the capture of carbon dioxide for mitigating climate change. This provide competitive edge in ensuring green development in Malaysia. Therefore, SDG 12 and SDG 13 needs to embrace nature.
- On biodiversity-climate change nexus, there are innovative financing measures by the government to conserve forests such as REDD+ financing framework and Ecological Fiscal Transfer which draws financing from public and private sector. However, there is still ongoing de-gazettment of PRFs for mining activities. Therefore, strong policy measures, policy coherence and enablers are needed urgently. High level decision-making body such as MyCAC should provide overarching policy recommendations. Policy clarity is also required to synchronise and define the term “forest” and “tree cover” under Malaysia’s pledge of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit.

2. Involvement of grassroot communities in providing solutions and innovative approaches.

- Local and grassroot experience needs to be captured more comprehensively. Top-down approach in policy-making needs to embrace new norm of including all stakeholders.
- Everyone has valid perspective that should be respected while grassroot solutions needs to be drawn out. Ms. Lavanya cited the efforts undertaken by the APPGM-SDG in localising the SDGs. The findings revealed that needs of communities varies between region and there is lot of innovative capacity at local level. These communities are at the forefront of climate change impacts and biodiversity loss.
- Therefore, connecting top-down and bottom-up approaches in policy making is important to address the lived reality of communities that are most vulnerable to climate change impacts. Important climate policies such as National Adaptation Plan, implementation of NDCs and long term Low Emission Development Strategy should be co-created through multi-stakeholder consultations.
- There are efforts by private sectors such as Shell that came up with several climate scenarios. Ms. Lavanya also mentioned that WWF-Malaysia is working with Boston Consulting Group in determining net zero emission pathway for Malaysia. The findings will serve as inputs in determining long term low emission strategy.
- Sustainable production efforts in the country should include all stakeholders on board and empowerment of grassroot communities. The VNR report provide example of sustainable palm oil production journey in Malaysia in getting smallholders Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) certified.

3. Changes needed to underpin decision making

- Ms. Lavanya provided the analogy of operating system that needs to be redefined. There have been various positive movement such as planetary health adoption mentioned by the Prime Minister in IGEM, doughnut economy approach and natural capital accounting. These items are required to ensure operating system can support SDG implementation. Otherwise, measurement of progress will always be in discord that differs from reality on the ground.
- Malaysia should move towards purpose and impact-driven economy rather than profit-oriented economy. There were some good advancements made by DOSM in developing energy and water accounts to be incorporated into national accounts (reported by the 11th Malaysia Plan mid-term review). More similar efforts are required to be integrated into decision making and progress assessment.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 4

Panelist 4: Pn. Noorliza Hashim (CEO, Urbanice Malaysia & Fellow MASA) (1/2)



Topic: General assessment of the VNR Report

- Pn. Noorliza recapped that the VNR theme for this year is sustainable and resilient recovery from Covid-19 that promote social and environment dimensions. This will shift the focus on building inclusivity for countries to achieve the 2030 agenda.
- Generally, she found that the focus of VNR Report towards selected SDGs have resulted in insufficient interlinkages and integration with other SDGs. SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) should have been a key part of VNR 2021 and focus of HLPF discussion. SDG 11 has the highest form of co-relation with other SDGs due to high rate of urbanisation at 78% and role of cities as frontline of Covid-19 pandemics.
- Many KASA initiatives as mentioned by Dr Nagu are not reflected in the report. She noticed that VNR report failed to report the progress of many targets. Only 5 out of 10 targets and 2 out of 5 targets were reported under SDG 12 and SDG 13 respectively.

Topic: Issues raised

- Pn. Norliza highlighted issues on weak interlinkages with other SDGs and poor integration of national actions and local actions. Subsequently, way forward and recommendations are included in following topic.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 4

Panelist 4: Pn. Noorliza Hashim (CEO, Urbanice Malaysia & Fellow MASA) (2/2)



Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

1. Improve interlinkages and integration with other SDGs

- SDG 12 and SDG 13 has many interlinkages with other sectors and SDGs but these are not reflected well in the VNR report. This weakness correlates with discussion points from other sessions regarding silo-approach in planning and implementation. Pn. Norliza provided few examples:
 - a) SDG 12 has strong influences on SDG6, SDG7, SDG11, SDG15 and SDG17 in context of sustainable management of natural resources. In particular, Target 12.1 emphasised on the efficiency use of water, energy & material flow to Target 6.4, Target 7.2 and Target 11(b) Achieving them would improve the objective of SDG 12.
 - b) On SDG 13, climate change as a virtuous cycle require all plans of action to be interlinked and coordinated at all levels. 90% of natural disasters in the past are related to climate and extreme weather.
- However, the targets of SDGs in the VNR are reported in silo manner. Understanding the interlinkages with other SDGs would improve progress reporting effectiveness, develop better understanding and contributes to Malaysia sustainability agenda.

2. Further localisation of the SDGs

- The VNR report addressed local actions as reflected by several box stories. But stronger focus on targets that needs more localisation of SDGs is required. For example, target 12.3 on food waste has direct implication on food security. Setting localised actions would help achieve urban food sustainability which is getting crucial in coping with the pandemic.
- Pn. Norliza highlighted the role of cities in SDG localisation. In this effort, Urbanise Malaysia are helping cities to prepare SDG roadmap and Voluntary Local Reviews (VLR). Shah Alam and Subang Jaya are the first cities that have submitted VLR report to HLPF in 2021.
- However, more work is required in integrating local actions with nation actions. Even though the targets can be aligned, the effectiveness and interlinkages needs better understanding.

3. Setting targets and mechanism for translation at local level.

- Pn Norliza stressed that translating national targets, policies and programmes to localised targets and mechanism are crucial in moving forward. This element is missing in the VNR report. For example, how does the recycling rate of 30.7% at national level translates to local rates? This translation is important to develop better local understanding on (i) waste to landfill reduction and (ii) waste diversion for circular economy. where local government can work with local industries.

4. Better inclusivity for SDG 12 and SDG 13

- SDG12 and SDG13 requires inclusive process, political commitment and understanding from local communities. SD 12.8 and 13.3 addresses awareness and information and this needs to reflect role of local government and stakeholders.

Q&A Session – Session 4 (1/2)

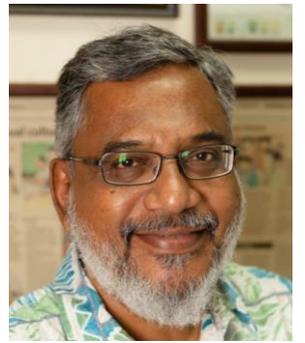
No	Question	Answer
1	<p>Nature-based Solutions (NbS) can provide higher ROI with multiple benefits. But do we have the institutional framework to implement it? There is historical issue of government agencies in Malaysia working in silo with separate mandates and KPIs. How can we mainstream NbS?</p>	<p>Dr Nagu: NbS have many definitions under different organisation. KASA is quite cautious in using them. Developed are looking into more carbon offsets and setting carbon neutral targets by 2050. KASA is worried that interpretation by developed countries to protect a forest/piece of land in Malaysia, receiving carbon credits and reducing emission in another area with no decarbonisation on their part. But NbS have a potent power if done properly to address both biodiversity loss and climate change. In Malaysia, we have been implementing them through Sustainable Forest Management and ecosystem-based approaches. But this needs to be mainstreamed. The federal-state dichotomy over environment needs to be addressed by putting value of nature and ecosystem services. One example is Payment for Ecosystem Service (PES) for water supply and putting value on goods (e.g. fruits) where States received money and be incentivised to keep forests. However, Rakyat needs to play a role.</p> <p>Ms. Lavanya: There should be a strategy on NbS since it cuts across various SDGs e.g., climate change, protect biodiversity, food security, water security, urban sustainability. Hopefully 12th Malaysia Plan will include strategies on NbS to address this cross-cutting issues. We should not be supporting polluting industries abroad by selling carbons. But that should not be a reason for us not to define NbS for ourselves. In that context, KetSA is defines REDD+ financing framework where carbon are only traded domestically with certain mechanisms being developed. The government already realised the danger of NbS being usurped to allow dirty industries developing abroad. The EFT is a good mechanism to motivate to keep States keeping forest. It's an investment since money given to States reduce natural disaster risks that will create higher cost of rehabilitation post-disaster. Prevention rather than cure. These are elements should be included in the NbS plan.</p>
2	<p>What's the point of having other type of indicators that include environment and biodiversity than GDP if addressing environment externalities are not embedded in policy and regulatory framework?</p>	<p>Dr. Nagu: The 11th Malaysia Plan have planted the seeds for natural-based accounting and it needs to be strengthened in the 12th Malaysia Plan. What needs to take a centre stage is equal attention given to all 3Ps. Perhaps new instrument needed to measure growth such as Inclusive Wealth Index and others. Unfortunately, the pandemic halt our progress but it's a huge wake up call. EPU can play a big role to re-define development trajectory.</p>
3	<p>How do cities and municipal councils influence local residents to view climate change as a serious crisis?</p>	<p>Pn Norliza: Climate hazards in cities are not explained well to communities such as flash floods, landslides and long-term water disruption. The relation to climate change are not being explained. The language and awareness needs to be shared to the communities. And because local government at the forefront of rescue works and cleaning up, there must be sharing of information clearly with the community on what and why is happening. Translation of climate change language to localised level is very important. Development of any blueprint/action plans for mitigation and adaptation needs to be translated at simple language. Many documents even at city level uses "high-level" language.</p> <p>YB Wong Tack: The SDGs and term such as climate change is very alien in most local administration even business leaders and community leaders. Many leaders at national level are also not familiar. All the high-level discussions but the problem affecting people at ground level and they people have to come together to solve the problem.</p>

Q&A Session – Session 4 (2/2)

No	Question	Answer
4	<p>Gender has been adopted as an important component of the Climate Change discourse in the form of the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan. What has been the Government's implementation to its commitment in this regard including gender composition of Party delegations to climate change meetings, gender climate change focal points in ministries and full, meaningful and equal participation and leadership of women in all aspects of local level climate policy and action?</p>	<p>Dr Nagu: Gender mainstreaming in KASA is fairly balanced and climate change division is headed by a women. Malaysia have equal representation at Conference of Parties (COP). In Malaysia context and at least environment ministries, there is probably more women staff than man. In the DOE, both Director General and Deputy Director General are both women. It's well addressed.</p>
5	<p>Would any member of the panel want to comment how kicking out durian farmers from Raub in Pahang and the cutting down of a reported 15,000 durian trees promotes the SDGs?</p>	<p>Ms. Lavanya: Not sure how they promoted SDG. They lacked consultation which is fundamental to achieve the SDGs.</p>

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 5

Moderator: Prof. Datuk Dr. Denison Jayasooria (Malaysian CSO SDG Alliance Co-Chair & Senior Fellow MASA)



Moderator's Introduction

- Welcome and now we are moving into the final segment of day 2. This session we are focusing on Chapter 6 of the VNR Report. Civil society has benchmark SDG 16 as a difficulty SDG to fulfill, element of social justice, human rights and corruption has been a constant challenge to fulfil and see desirable development. However, SDG 17 has made lots of progress both at the national and international level. We have good panel members in this discussion and let's welcome and take a photo session with all the panelists.

Moderator's Closing Remarks

- We have come to the end of the discussion. Thank you to all the panelists for their views and I know what has emerged and I hope EPU can note on the many ongoing issues and let this be part of the discussion for continuous improvement and development. Take this opportunity to thank all the role players, The UN, APPGM- SDG, MASA, EPU and CSO SDG Alliance. We had 29 role players. This is not the end but a beginning and will be an ongoing process in our relations as multi stakeholder, at the district and at the local authority level. We will prepare a comprehensive report within a month so that we can monitor all the suggestions and recommendations for continuous follow up.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 5

Panelist 1: Mr. Baidilleh Bin Ghazali (Director, Security & Public Order Division, Economic Planning Unit) (1/2)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report - SDG 16/SDG 17

SDG 16

Reduce All Forms of Violence

- The crime perception improved from 45% in 2018 to 66% in 2019.
- Towards maintaining the global peace, Malaysia ranked 25th out of 126 troop contributing countries, participating in UN Peacekeeping Operations

Rule of Law

- National legal aid foundation was established in 2011 as a public-private partnership model in the provision of legal aid.

Reducing Bribery and Corruption

- The battle against corruption has seen investigation papers increased by 24.7% to 1,039 cases in 2019 as compared to 833 cases in 2018
- Number of arrests in accepting bribes has increased to 570 cases in 2019 as compared to 518 in 2018. This is a positive sign that enforcement has increased

Good Governance

- Good governance - In 2019, 9073 complaints were resolved compared to 5805 in 2018. The percentage of complaints resolved has remained above 90% in the previous 5 years.
- A series of reforms have been led by the governance, integrity and Anti-corruption (GIACC)

SDG 17

- Malaysia has supported 144 developing countries under the framework of the South-South Cooperation since 1980 via the Malaysian Cooperation Programme. Malaysia has offered more than 65 technical and capacity- building programmes which have benefited 34,000 Participants
- The SDGs has been incorporated into the Development planning agenda through the Malaysia Plans
- The SDG Road Map was produced that aligns with the 5-year development plans
- Voluntary Local reviews are currently being undertaken in an effort to localise SDGs
- Towards a whole of nation approach, the Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance was established as a network of CSOs committed to adopt the SDG Framework
- The All-Party Parliamentary Group on SDG is an innovative model where CSOs, academics and experts collaborate with Parliamentarians to localise SDGs
- Un Global Compact has built strong networks across the private sector towards raising the ambition of companies and forms for the 2030 agenda
- APPGM-SDG is an innovative modal to implement SDGs

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 5

Panelist 1: Mr. Baidilleh Bin Ghazali (Director, Security & Public Order Division, Economic Planning Unit) (2/2)



Topic: Issues Raised

SDG 16

- Gender Inequality - Barrier in ensuring women's full and equal opportunities in politics, economy and society
- Gender disparities remain, in relation to gender-based violence and sexual abuse.
- Access to Justice - Challenges remain for improving physical and financial access to justice
- Economically disadvantaged also lack equitable access to due to high legal fees and thereby restricting access depending on economic status
- Good Governance: The delivery process is complex, consisting of the federal, state, and local governments as well as various ministries and agencies
- Significance challenge as evidenced by increased by the increased number of cases involving bribery

SDG 17

- Funding for Technical development is a challenge to continue to provide for technical development that is funded by Malaysia Globally
- Federal and State political differences that affects the implementation of the SDGs overlapping roles both implementing agencies affect
- Availability of data is crucial for implementation of SDGs, now we have disaggregated data across demographic

Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

SDG 16

- To prevent Gender Based violence and enhance Women's empowerment there must be specific policies and instruments and women - friendly work policies
- Ensure access to justice for all, need to increase financial access justice, public access to information and explore legislation to promote freedom of information
- To attain good governance, the NACP in battling corruption aim to resolve 75% of initiatives by 2023
- Various efforts under GIACC will be implemented including in procurement, political donations and tender evaluation

SDG 17

- Explore ways to strengthen inclusive assistance for South - South Cooperation and partnership such as the Colombo Plan, German International Technical plan.
- Policy coherence that needs to align with the SDG Road map
- Involving District office and multi stakeholder partnership in localising SDGs
- Enhance participation of grassroots communities, private sectors, district offices for capacity building programs

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 5

Panelist 2: YB Puan Maria Chin Abdullah (APPGM-SDG Deputy Chairman & MP of Petaling Jaya)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

- Peace Justice and Human rights - truth to ourselves and take stock of the inequalities - how it may bring growth equally
- Covid has exacerbated the poverty condition, people have lost jobs
- M40 falling into poverty line, poor dropping further and it's worrying even though we have a nice VNR report and yet we still have challenging issues, unresolved corruption cases
- Catching not small fishes but big ones in MACC has to be more transparent and strengthen the investigation procedures without fear and favor in dealing with corruption
- Research showed 38% of students have no access to devices to have online lessons.
- Race and religion patronage still an issue

Topic: Issues Raised

- We do not have a parliament, our country does not have a check and balance
- Efforts to curb media freedom - death in custody, freedom of assembly curbed
- Efforts towards reform put in the back end
- Peace and justice also mean ending violence, ending human rights violence, corruption, ending repressive laws, sedition acts, SOSMA, bringing prison reforms, implementing IPCMC. Now is the time to stop political persecution. Now is the time to build bridges

Topic: Ways Forward/Recommendations

- Stronger institutions must start from the bottom-up approach - include all grassroots, academicians, politicians. Empowering people and structures. People's participation gives them dignity. Ownership gives them responsibility, dignity, and pride.
- National reconciliation bill needs to be re-discussed
- Inclusion of needs of migrants must be seen as part of solution
- Women have to be a part of the solution
- Example of success in implementing and localising SDGs is evident through the formation of APPGM -SDG
- People's participation, for example creating a livable condition, gives dignity the right to own and good housing, public housing is not working example PPR flats. People need help, especially the poor and vulnerable. Livable, peaceful and good housing conditions.
- Peace and justice is also meant to end violence, inequalities and reduce shrinking democracy space, ending repressive laws, prison reforms.
- IPMCC to be implemented - bring back integrity and Stop political persecution - time to build bridges and not to be divisive
- Violence against the vulnerable must be stopped ad safe the interest of the migrants
- Introduce a comprehensive social safety net to include and protect during any pandemic and shocks in the future and create a conducive environment especially for the poor

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 5

Panelist 3: Mr. Anthony Tan (Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance) (1/2)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

- Public access to information and fundamental freedom protection: Establishment of open data initiatives at the Federal level and Open Government data rights with discretion of individual ministries.
- Reduction of all forms of violence and related death rates: Community Mediation and Inter-religious Mediation services by the Department of National Unity and Integration to make mediation as an alternative dispute resolution.
- Non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development including:
- Achievement of Gender parity in education.
- Amendment to several legislation such as Penal Code, Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2007, Domestic Violence Act of 1994, Employment Act of 1955.
- Adoption of the National Women’s Policy and Action Plan 2009 – 2015.
- Promoting rule of law and equal access for all: Ratification of treaties including United Nation Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).
- Participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance: Alignment of SDGs key elements with the 11th Malaysia Plan 2016-2020 to strengthen public sector institutions.

Topic: Issues Raised

1. Public access to information and fundamental freedom

The Official Secrets Act (OSA) continues to be the main challenge to freedom of information. The OSA breeds a culture of secrecy in the civil service since they are unsure about the future of the practice of information management and disclosure. Current Access to information for Indigenous People’s needs is most often left behind.

2. Institutional capacities and complexities

The operation of Institutions at sub-national level suffers over-centralization of decision-making power at federal level. Furthermore, public participation at local government level remains low.

3. Corruption and bribery

There is still a lack of strategic mechanism to expose executive and civil servants to good governance.

4. Discrimination and harassment under human rights

Some policymakers and legislators in Malaysia lack understanding of universal human rights values and norms and fail to address the needs of migrants, refugees and victims of trafficking. There is still no safe migration law and policy on migrants which makes these groups more vulnerable with no access to justice, protection, health care, proper jobs and risks being abused by employers.

5. Violence and death-related cases

There is a need to communicate about violence especially in the private sphere. In Malaysia, the LGBT community, especially the transgender, is being targeted and abused.

6. Upholding the rule of law

The amendments to the Legal Aid Act 1971 expressly preclude non-Malaysians from having access to legal aid services. Furthermore, legal aid assistance programs do not specifically focus on women’s rights nor take into account the specific vulnerabilities of women from marginalised communities.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 5

Panelist 3: Mr. Anthony Tan (Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance) (2/2)



Recommendations and Way Forward

- Moving towards an economic model that is more progressive and systemic that integrates economic, social and environment factors creating a shared economy, and growing in harmony with the environment and nature.
- Establish an ‘Oversight Committee’ or similar body to reform weak institutions from whose main purpose was to gain the people’s loyalty [to the government and change them into economic enterprises which provide good economic life to the participants.
- Urgently implement a data collection and reporting system at the local level that is standardised and aligned to the SDG targets and indicators. Voluntary Local Reviews should be integrated with national reviews based on the UNESCAP Asia Pacific Regional Guidelines on Voluntary Local Reviews.
- Intensify meaningful and genuine multi-party decision-making among the local authorities, assemblymen, NGOs, communities, businesses and academia.
- Conduct intensive capacity-building at the local level for achieving meaningful local-based sustainable development on the way to achieving National goals.
- Amend Paragraphs (b) and (c) in Part 111 of the Federal Constitution to ensure the mother of a child born overseas has the right to automatically transmit her citizenship to the child.
- Repeal all national, state laws and policies that discriminate, especially on cultural and spiritual customs and practices.
- Revise the National Registration Policy that currently doesn’t recognise cultural marriages, nor traditional village home-based delivery of new-born, which ends-up rendering even more persons born in our country into a situation of statelessness.

Progress and Achievements

- The government of Malaysia has recognised the contribution of the Civil Society Organisations in strengthening the delivery of the SDGs. The formation of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on SDGs which was approved by the Parliament of Malaysia in October 2019 was the result of the collaborative work begun with the Malaysian CSO SDG Alliance.

Gaps and Challenges

- Localizing the SDGs to “leave no one behind” is a continuous challenge at the grassroots level.
- Government programs and assistance are still not reaching the actual target group, especially the vulnerable and the minority groups.

Recommendations

- Move forward policies & institutional coherence, deepen dialogue, network building & partnerships, data-based decision making & monitoring system.
- Conduct capacity building for various stakeholders including Faith Based, Non-Governmental, and Civil Society Organisations towards Localising SDG 2030
- Conduct interfaith engagement to mobilise religious leaders to address human trafficking and climate change.
- Embrace multi-stakeholder partnership where government and Civil Society Organisations join hands to end modern slavery.
- Discuss disability issues via multi-stakeholder engagement between government, NGO and private sector in line with the spirit of inclusion.
- Implement a better monitoring system and scrutinize the role of local authorities. For example, some local authorities offer free buses and vans, but the services are not reaching the marginalised and the people with disability.
- Strongly recommend that EPU consider strengthening the synergy of SDG16 and SDG17 by moving these 2 SDGs from the Well Being and Economic Growth Working Committees respectively and shifting them into a new Working Committee specifically for Peace and Partnership.

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 5

Panelist 4: Prof. Datuk Dr. Ahmad Murad Mohd Noor Merican (Professor, ISTAC-IIUM & Senior Fellow MASA) (1/2)



Topic: General Assessment of the VNR Report

- Fundamental in this SDG is the narrative on nationhood and nation building. After almost 64 years, we are still in disarray as to the national narrative and history. There are many histories of the nation. It has been ethicized, politicized and regionalized. Thus, is fundamental and must be addressed. We do not want the ground norm of the nation to be challenged and eroded. All contentions, disagreements and differences must be located within the national ground norm, the ground rules embedded in history, institutions, values. The Rukun Negara and the Federal Constitution is the framework regulating civil national behaviour, norms and attitudes.

Topic: Issues Raised

1. Media self-regulatory mechanism
 - The need for Press/Media reform - online media platforms
 - Malaysian Media Council through an Act of Parliament that would administer Code of ethics. Important to educate journalists and the public, not to curb media freedom, which constitutes journalism.
 - Education on press freedom and expression
 - Use of information
 - Definition of journalism as a profession
 - Quality journalism
 - Media commission to replace pertinent functions of the Minister and the Ministry, regards to legislative matters
2. Media funding for equitable, democratization and representation of expression
 - Mainstreaming national interest and values
 - Ensure existence of media in the national and vernacular languages
 - Opinions and debates to ensure mainstream values for the nation
 - Funding of press and online portals through parliament

Key Highlights from Speakers – Session 5

Panelist 4: Prof. Datuk Dr. Ahmad Murad Mohd Noor Merican (Professor, ISTAC-IIUM & Senior Fellow MASA) (2/2)



Way Forward and Recommendations

1. To establish a National Culture and Language Policy
 - Return to principles of 1971
 - A continuous transparent dialogue
 - Reconstitute Ministry of National Unity to Ministry of National Unity, Education and Culture
2. To introduce a combination of Ministry of National Unity and Ministry Education and include Culture
 - Policy of integration, not assimilation
 - Putting education in context
 - One school system
 - Establishing the consciousness and practice of national culture
3. The need to reform political culture and political parties and political behaviour. There must be some form of regulation in place for parliamentarians on right political behaviour. Feedback of citizenry is important. SDG 16 promote peaceful and inclusive society
 - Since 2018, the whole list of reforms has overlooked political parties and political culture
 - Self-regulatory and regulatory mechanisms/ombudsman
 - This is beyond Parliamentary regulations and the Election commission
 - Sanctions can be by moral suasion or punitive or a combination; not the extent of imprisonment, but finds and statements of condemnation
 - Regulation of political ethics and behaviour
 - Law on declaration of assets
 - Periodic electoral feedback on performance/behaviour of parliamentarians and people's representatives (once in 6 months)

Q&A Session – Session 5

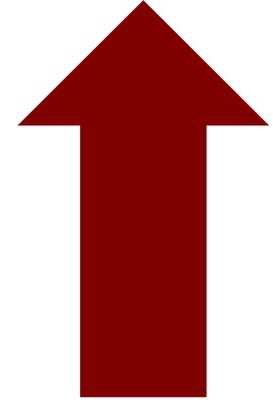
No	Question	Answer
1	Clarification to EPU on the access to legal aid.	<p>Mr. Baidilleh Bin Ghazalir: Government assists those unfortunate by the government assistant legal - Biro Bantuan Guaman, refer to private legal institutions. Effort to enhance the legal aid act. Need further explanation from EPU from email. Many efforts needed to protect the rights of the children based on the convention on the rights of children.</p>
2	What plans does the SDG roadmap have to remedy discrimination against that exists in the law?	<p>YB Maria: Interconnectedness needed by collaborating with other ministries to address women discrimination issues On the Migrants improving their condition, there is a report prepared but not tabled in the parliament. Including the concerns of the disable is very important in the development plans and policies and start regulating it. Having regular discussion. Good idea to have a regulator to monitor the politicians and political parties. Important is political financing monitoring which is in place now</p> <p>Anthony Tan: Dignity is very important for everyone, for all citizens and non-citizens. Need to treat everyone in a dignified manner</p> <p>Prof Murad: Regulation of political parties is key and not only on political financing. There is a need for an ombudsman. Be partisan at all levels, mediate and discuss. Hold honest conversation and acceptance and disagreement. Taking on a variety of discussions and including everyone. We need to engage with the national institutes.</p> <p>Mr. Baidileh: Continuous improvement on enhancing gender mainstreaming framework and to, include gender perspective in formulating policies.</p>

Feedback from Participants

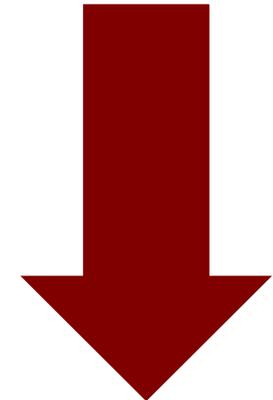
- To have a Dynamic Dashboard is used to present the report.
- To have more SDG awareness online/physical program conducted.
- To use Bahasa Malaysia as a medium of delivery for upcoming programs and presentations.
- Participants were hoping that the proposals are translated into action, especially sustainability and climate change.
- Participants felt that it was very well moderated and different constructive views were presented.
- Participants would like to have the speakers' slides after the session for their references.
- To given the speakers a framework by using a set of 3 questions to help them be more concise in addressing the VNR - what is good about the report, what are the Gaps and what are the recommendations.
- The participants were happy that the speakers had addressed most of the questions live, and in the Q&A and chat section.
- The timing from each speaker was on schedule and the session finished on time.

- To ensure the speakers to mute their microphones at all times or to mute their phones when talking.
- To have slide presentations for every speakers to ensure the information is presented crystal clear.
- Participants felt that the speakers needed more time to elaborate with too many points
- To reduce the number of speakers for each session.
- To have more promotion of the program on social media to attract more participants.

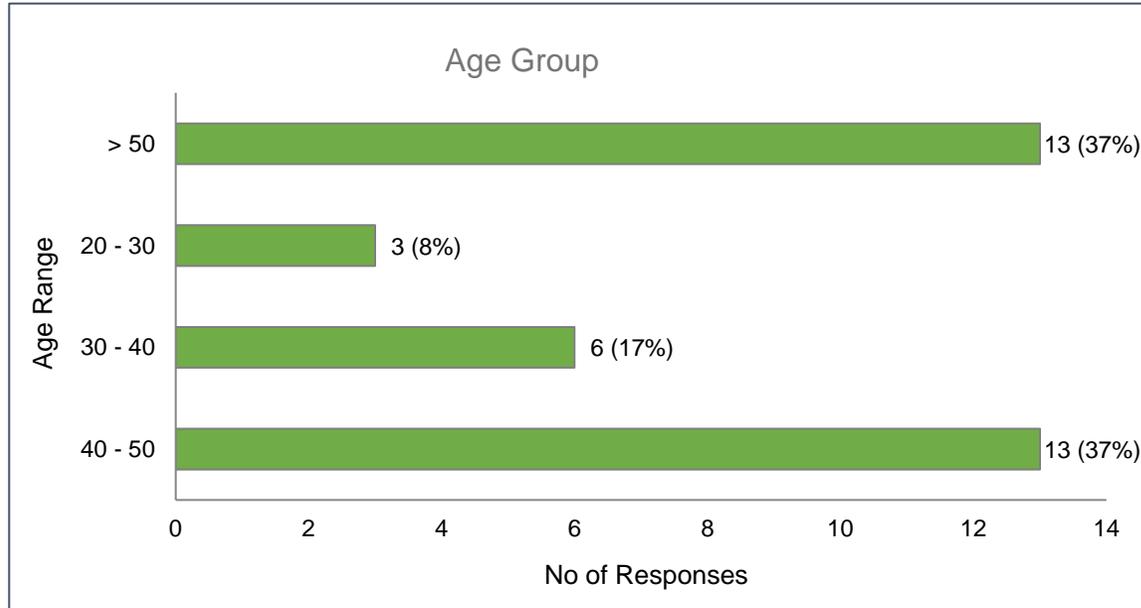
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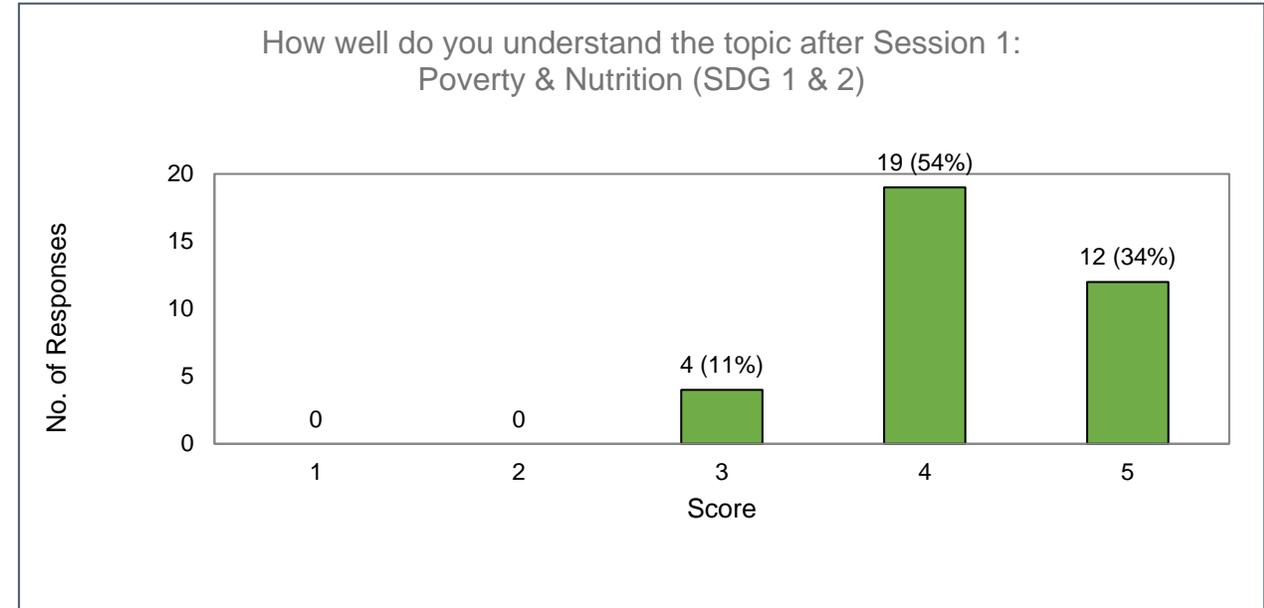
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Feedback from Participants – Day 1 (1/2)

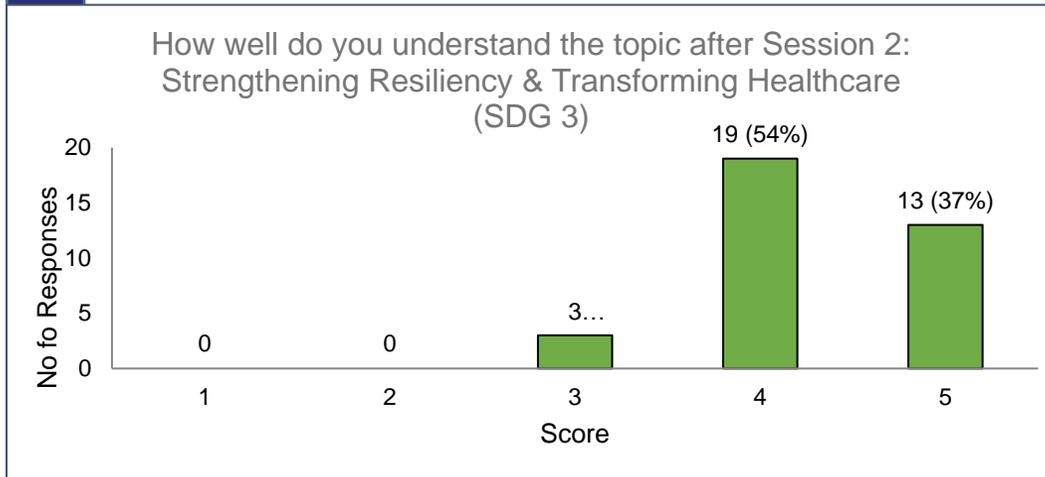


The majority of participants came from the 40-50 and above 50 age group.

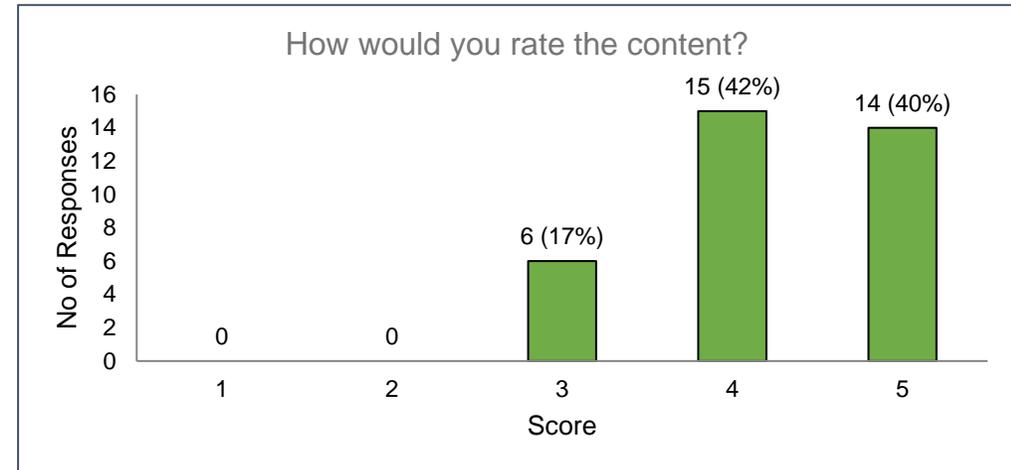


Topic Rating Session 1 - 54% and 34% of attendees rated 4 and 5 respectively.

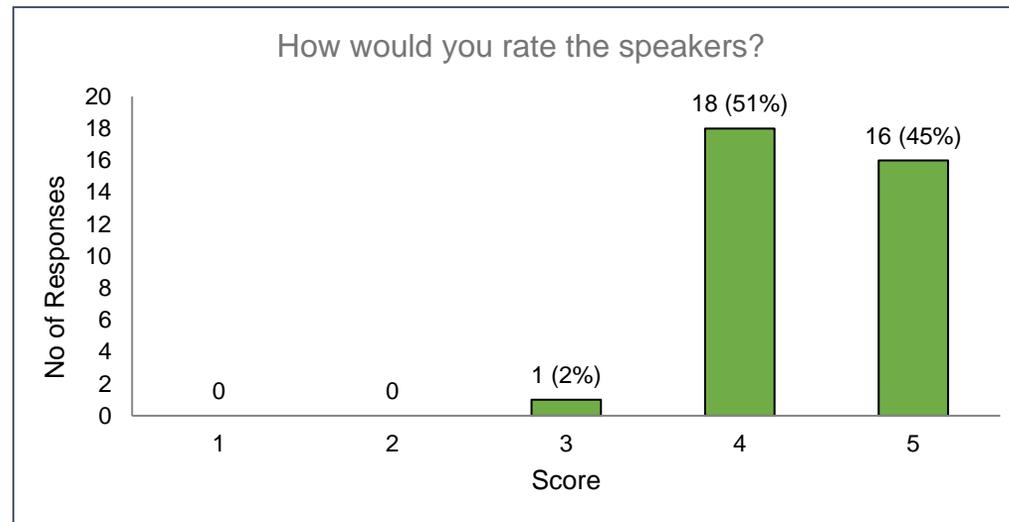
Feedback from Participants – Day 1 (2/2)



Topic Rating Session 2 - 54% & 37% of attendees rated 4 & 5 respectively.

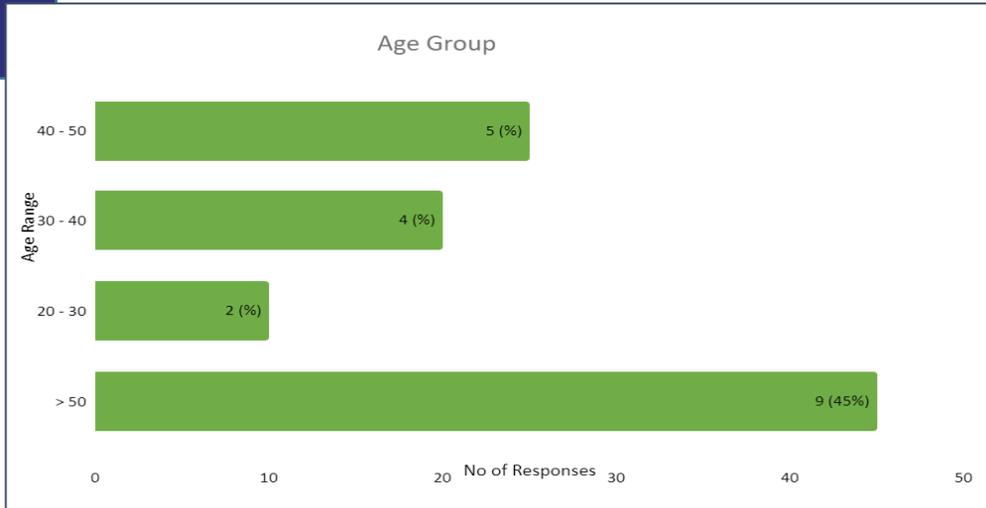


Content Rating - 42% and 40% of attendees rated 4 and 5 respectively.

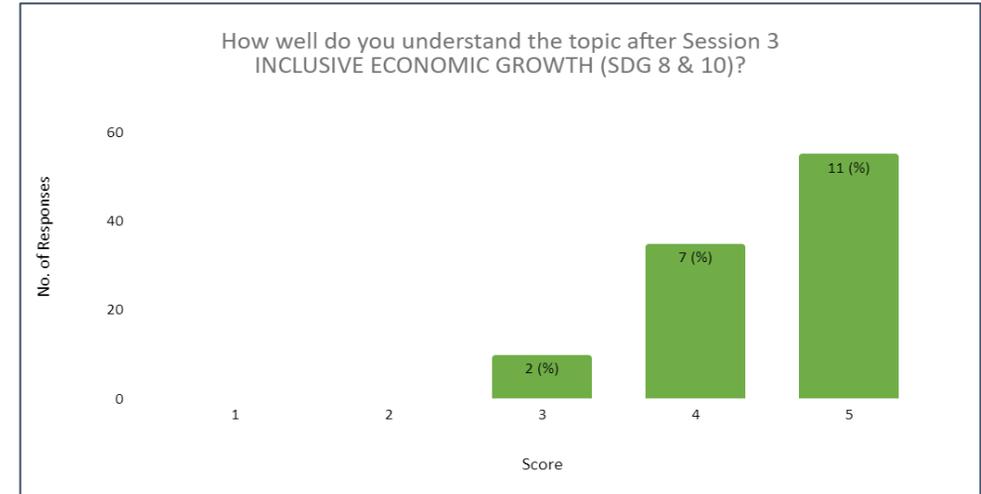


Speakers Rating - 51% and 45% of attendees rated 4 and 5 respectively.

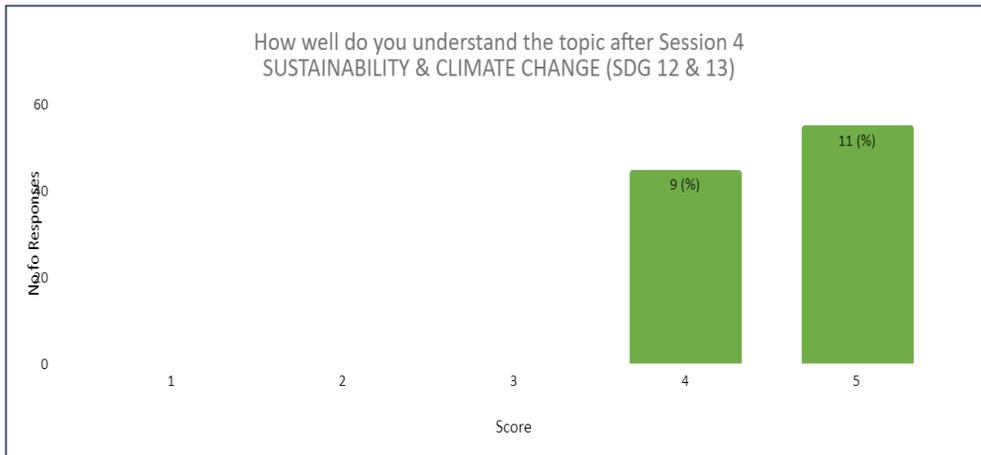
Feedback from Participants – Day 2 (1/2)



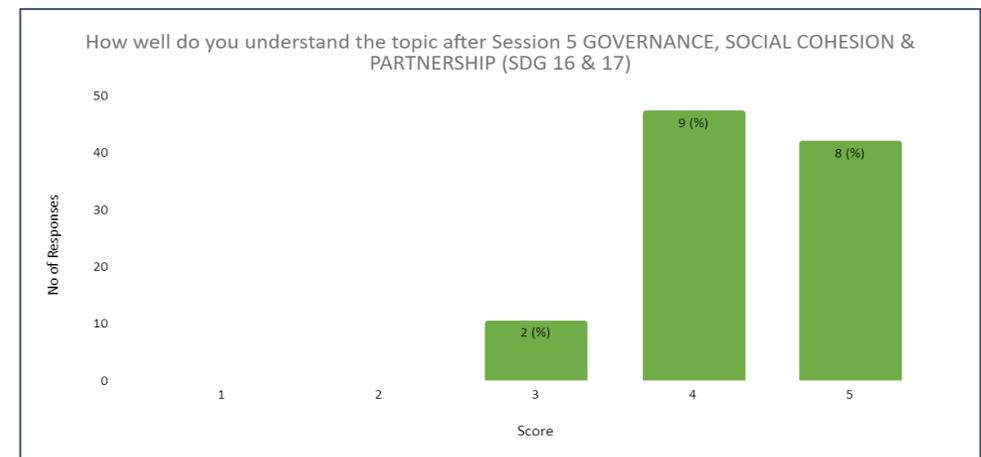
The majority of participants came from the 40-50 age group.



Topic Rating Session 3 - 35% and 55% of attendees rated 4 and 5 respectively.

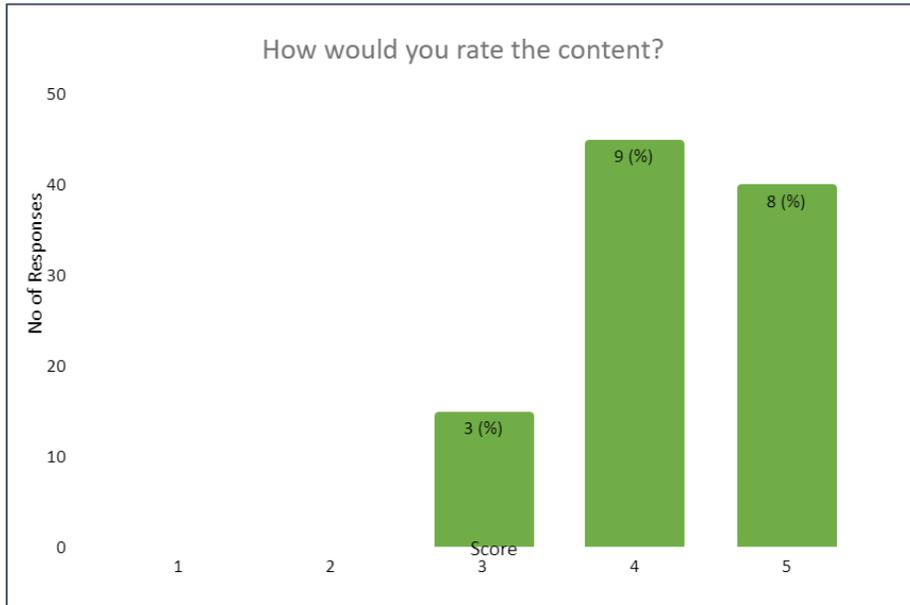


Topic Rating Session 4 - 45% & 55% of attendees rated 4 & 5 respectively.

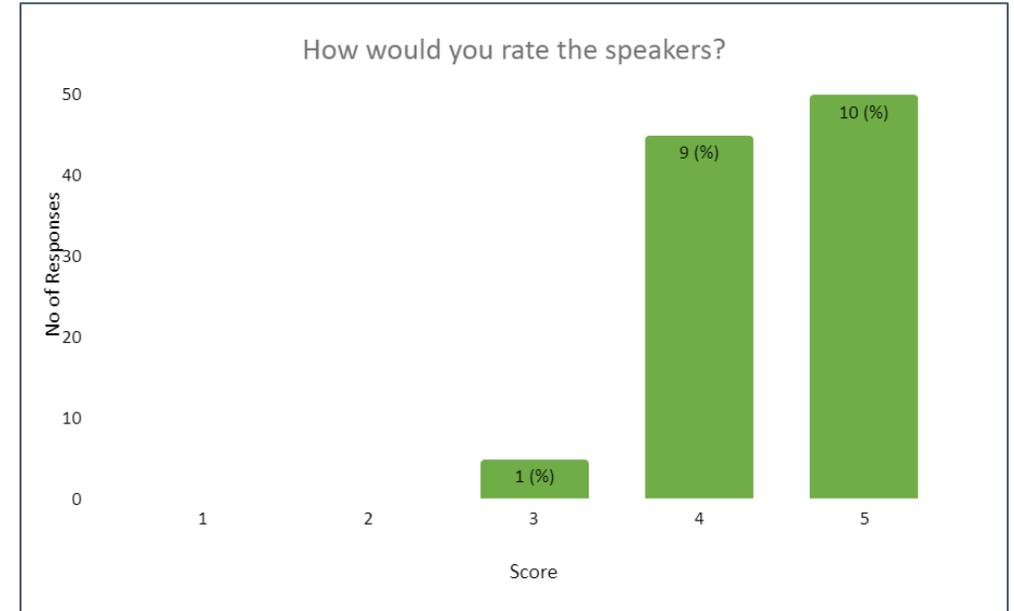


Topic Rating Session 5 - 45% and 40% of attendees rated 4 and 5 respectively.

Feedback from Participants – Day 2 (2/2)



Content Rating - 45% and 40% of attendees rated 4 and 5 respectively.



Speakers Rating - 45% and 50% of attendees rated 4 and 5 respectively.

Feedback from Participants – List of Suggested Topics

List of Suggested Topics for Upcoming Webinar

1. Community Engagement and Other Measures on Dealing with Climate Change and Biodiversity Change
2. Undertake public quarterly review discussions on SDG over the next 4 years and document the ideas for the 3rd Malaysian VNR in 2025 or 2026
3. Belt & Road Initiative projects in Malaysia and ASEAN
4. Intersectionality of SDGs
5. Post Covid19 Pandemic Recovery Plan
6. Education And Social
7. Transformation of vulnerable families encountering mental health, marital conflicts, domestic violence and other psychosocial issues that will have negative impact on our growing children/next generation.
8. SDG 5 - Gender Equality
9. Industry development
10. A series on Building Back Better - one focusing on social protection: another on New Health Deal: 3rd - impact of Climate Change on Malaysia and what steps to take now to mitigate
11. The Rights of Future Generations
12. Well-being focusing on mental health
13. Understanding data collection for the SDGs - who are involved, who are not involved and why not?
14. Webinars on the particular area of SDG for more dialogues to happen within civil society.
15. How can communities participate in the SDGs

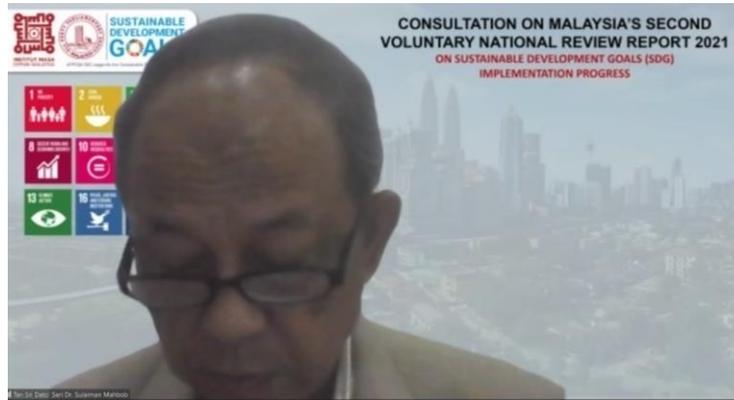
Program Achievements

No.	KPI	Registered (pax)	Outcome (pax)	
1.	500 participants	218	Attended via Zoom	Day 1 – 163 Day 2 – 124
			FB Live	Day 1 – 512 Day 2 – 594
2.	There were many interesting questions brought up by the audience. This shows their curiosity and concern of the Malaysian Second Voluntary National Review 2021 (VNR) Report			
3.	The panellists' delivered dynamic and impactful sessions. There were many key important points and recommendations discussed and enthusiasts the participants.			
4.	Based on the feedbacks received, on average, most of the audience from the 5-session understood the topics and rated the panellist's excellent in delivering the content.			
5.	Obtained some suggestions from the audience on topics for upcoming PEMACU WACANA sessions.			

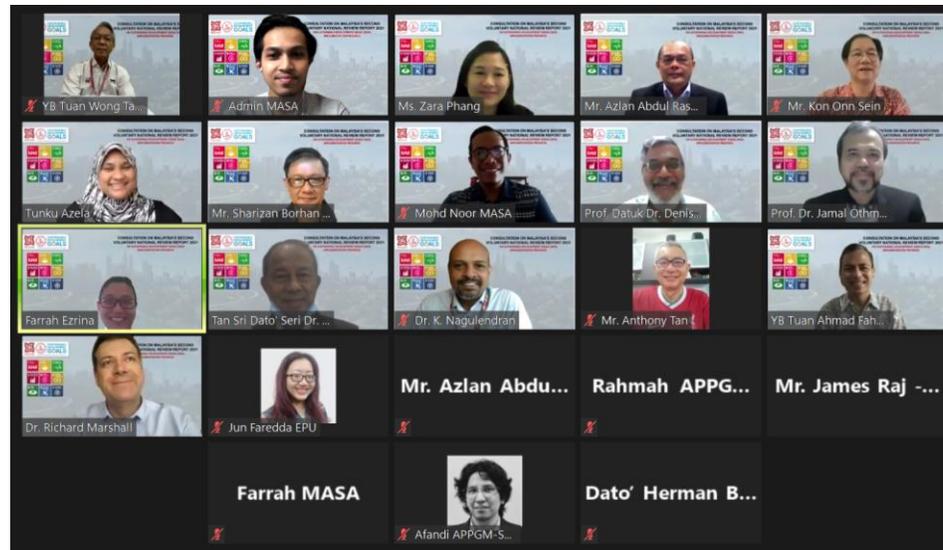
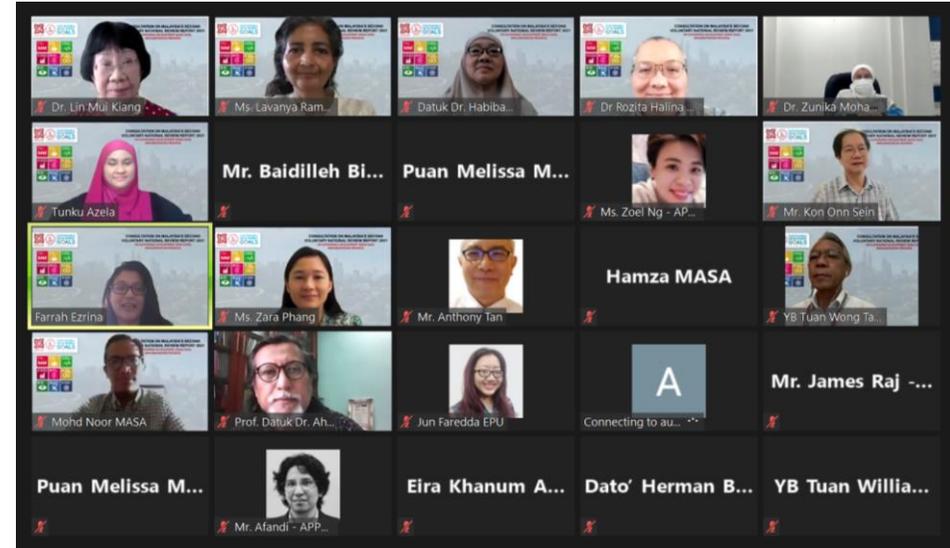


APPENDICES

Appendix A: Program Photos (1/2)



Appendix A: Program Photos (2/2)



Appendix B: List of Questions – Plenary Session

1. There is a need to remove the restrictions on employment of foreign spouses married to Malaysians, in the best interest of the family. Will the statement of prohibition from employment be removed from their visas, so they can also contribute to the taxes and the GDP of the country and to ensure that bi-national Malaysian families are not left behind?
Bina Ramanand - co-founder Foreign Spouses Support Group
2. The VNR touches each goal but selective of the Indicators within each Goal. May I know where can CSOs obtain updates on other indicators from EPU/DOSM. I would appreciate support on EPU on where can we get the progress updates on SDG 5.1.1. Thanks, again! - Zharin Zhafrael
3. Can you elaborate the reason why Goal 5 Gender Equality is excluded from the economic roadmap? How is the roadmap addressing the persistent gender pay gap and inequality of economic opportunities access? - Anonymous
4. Although Goal 5 of the SDGs is a stand-alone goal, the UN has emphasised that goal 5 on gender equality is a cross cutting goal across all SDG s . What efforts and especially indicators pertaining to goal 5 have been undertaken to operationalise goal 5 across all SDG goals. - Mary Shanthi Dairiam
5. On question on inclusivity, are race based policies still relevant moving forward? - Farez Amha Abdullah
6. What are the direct role of the state governments and local authorities? We talk about the whole of government approach, but their role is mostly confined via KPKT. - Amy TAM
7. What would be areas of monitoring & evaluation function from the non-govt sectors that can be improved to better provide evidence for VNR? - Nurshafenath Shaharuddin
8. Malaysia has ratified 3 human rights treaties on women, children and the disabled that are essential to ensure no one is left behind. The data and obligations and monitoring of these treaties need to be synchronised with the monitoring of the SDGs. But we are failing in our reporting obligations under these treaties. How do you explain this – Mary
9. Without the endorsement of 12th Malaysia plan in the parliment, how does the governance and funding for initiatives will take place? - Sumeeta Neelamegam
10. Reference to our EPU YB Minister, what are the steps taken to create awareness about SDGs to the Malaysian in general. - Gunapathy Arumugam
11. Can Puan Zunika please include the latest progress update on Gender Equality into this VNR 2021 report? Last update being 2019 is rather old and we see the impact of the pandemic has exacerbated the inequality and domestic violence. - Zharin Zhafrael
12. I was just wondering if the efforts done in the SDG is taking advantage or leverage or collaborate with other National level efforts such as the Malaysia Digital Plan that has education and social cluster? – Roslan Bakri Zakaria
13. This is my first time involves in this session. may I know why SDG 11 sustainable cities and sustainable communities? Since the discussion also mentioned about development and creating communities. - Ahmad Hariza Hashim
14. Reference to our EPU YB Minister, what are the steps taken to create awareness about SDGs to the Malaysian in general.
15. Have efforts been done in the SDG to take advantage or leverage or collaborate with other National level efforts such as the Malaysia Digital Plan that has education and social cluster?
16. The Way Forward for Poverty eradication does not seem to employ the WOG and WOS approach? Any program to empower the poor through enabling economic activities for them?....as the saying goes, give them the fishing rods, not the fish?
17. Will the government embark on nationwide integrated livestock farming system and close loop system to address land scarcity and high cost of animal feed?
18. How will Malaysia navigate the policy of Social Safety nets in the future?
19. How are stateless children included in the work towards SDGs, while ensuring that they are not exposed to discrimination and the associated risks, in the absence of clear inclusion measures e.g., discriminatory nationality laws with very limited and arbitrary access to citizenship?

Appendix B: List of Questions – Session 1

1. To ensure identification of those who are being left behind it is important disaggregated data is collected and the variance is clear in National reports. What plans are afoot to enable this to be clearer especially in relation to the Sabah and Sarawak varied Bumiputra groups (currently not disaggregated): those living in remote rural compared to rest of rural locations: poverty clusters in urban areas and number of children living in poverty not just number of households under the poverty line? Currently high concentrations can be missed eg there is one administrative district in Sarawak where – according to the Household Survey of 2019 the number of households - living below the absolute poverty level (as it was then) is 38.6%. As this is a measure of income it also does not give the full impact of poverty communities far from basic services experience.
2. As for the B40 group, are the figures a reflection of All ethnic groups who are Malaysians?
3. Loss of Lands Compounds poverty. There are two systems of law in operation in Sarawak - the statute law and the customary law. The use of the English common law without having regard to native custom has technically dispossessed the Indigenous people of their traditional territorial domain (pemakai menoa and pulau galau) and the natural resources found in them. These resources are the main sources of food and household needs. The point to stress here is the loss of basic rights to land, together with the natural resources, will continue to compound the poverty of the rural indigenous people.
4. Huge food import bill & scarcity of land for food production were cited in your presentation. How do we balance this with the food related exports income (including palm oli for food) Malaysia receives? - Farez Amha
5. How will Malaysia navigate the policy of Social Safety nets in the future? - Farez Amha Abdullah
6. The Way Forward for Poverty eradication does not seem to employ the WOG and WOS approach? Any program to empower the poor through enabling economic activities for them?....as the saying goes, give them the fishing rods, not the fish? -Mohamad Saleh Jaafar
7. Will the government embark on nationwide integrated livestock farming system and close loop system to address land scarcity and high cost of animal feed? - Ahmad Afandi Nor Azmi
8. How are stateless children included in the work towards SDGs, while ensuring that they are not exposed to discrimination and the associated risks, in the absence of clear inclusion measures e.g., discriminatory nationality laws with very limited and arbitrary access to citizenship? -Sharmila Sekaran
9. Agree to Dr Nair's point to engage the contributors of informal economy into the social safety net. I have a question to Dr Nair. With regards to the need of improving food production, we know that a large number of smallholders and independent farmers are engaged in agriculture, Addressing their needs will be important to food security in Malaysia. One of their major concerns is lack of labor force and difficulty of migrant workers recruitment. Yet, one of your recommendations is to reduce the numbers of migrant workers. Can you please elaborate your rationale? Also, how do smallholders benefit from the national's plan on poverty and food? - Jia Yen Lai
10. In my opinion the reaching out initiatives are too fragmented. We need to consolidate Resources, data, efforts. Hence more effective strategies for roll out - mapping initiatives with cso and industry partners. - Anita Charles
11. Why are wages still low for 'youth group' work? - Kamil Kharazzi Roslam
12. When can we have social security and protection that helps citizens to keep going while they try to get back on their feet/or keeps them going if they are unable to do so due to external factors? All our protections at present do not seem sufficient at all, especially for the sick, elderly, unemployed. We should look to countries have the unemployment benefits/protections plus they assist people to seek re-employment. We need something like this in our country. Something that works without the months-long bureaucracies and red tape in place.
13. Based on the SDGs Leave No One behind and the inclusiveness of the 11th and 12th Malaysia Plans there has to be an exercise to identify the socially marginalized groups such as the indigenous, the elderly, Persons with Disabilities, migrant workers (14% of the labour force), undocumented persons and the stateless. Question : what special measures has the Government taken to identify these groups in the urban and rural areas and bring them into the mainstream of development and to empower them so that they too can be independent economically. Rita Reddy.
14. It appears that what we really need is proper leadership to champion the integration and implementation plan
15. All the speakers are saying exactly what all of us *rakyat* are feeling. But where is the efficient implementation by the government? When will social protections be of satisfactory quality in keeping people alive without the need for *kibaran bendera putih*? Social protections in developed nations look towards assisting people in their times of unemployment and assistance in seeking re-employment, as well as assessing those unemployable and in need of monthly life-sustaining support. When can we reach this stage?

Appendix B: List of Questions – Session 2

1. At present, how are the SDGs guiding the Government, particularly the Ministers who are now making policies that are directly impacting the rakyat. Is there a Commission that is pushing for these at this critical time? - Melanianne, Yin Yeoh
2. Non-citizen children born overseas to either parent Malaysian do not have access to Government Health care at same rate as Malaysians, there is also the intersectionality that some of these children are physically challenged or require long term medical treatment. Many of them are single mothers and have challenges paying for the healthcare of their non-Malaysian children, when will there be inclusivity in not leaving them behind under SDG 3? - Bina Ramanan
3. “One health and one welfare” approach is gaining more attention that focus critical connection between human health, animal health and environment health. Any comments on how government can mainstream and adopt this in public health? - Ahmad Afandi Nor Azmi
4. An important area such as vaccinations at affordable rates for non-citizen children was left out of the VNR. When will the Government make vaccinations free for this group of children. Many of them are children of single Malaysian Mothers born overseas, refugee and migrant children? We are also concerned that there was not much reporting on migrants and refugees, was there any particular reason for this? - Bina Ramanand
5. is there any mention of mainstreaming the OSCC as part of the public health advocacy in the VNR under SDG3? - Nazreen Nizam
6. I welcome all panelist's comments that health is cross-cutting and need a holistic approach. There is a lot of evidence that shows a healthy natural environment contributes to both physical and mental health. Are there any plans from the Ministry of Health to support protection of and access to natural environment? - Zara Phang
7. With our population will face an aging society, did the system of public health have the capacities and capabilities to safeguard and sustained rakyat’s health and wellbeing? Does it possible our public health will move to privatization? -
8. No one mentioned Universal Health Coverage- Centrally managed medical insurance to cover all. This may ease some of the Government health stresses. Can someone provide some thoughts.
9. How should we pay for healthcare reforms and future-proofing healthcare infrastructure, which will cost money? Should we not introduce national health insurance to complement existing funding as we have reached the limits of tax funded financing? - Azrul Mohd Khalib
10. Dr Murali and Dr Khor if there is reform over reform, why are the curative spend still much higher than preventive spend? Waiting lines in public health is still very long sometime years. Surely more needs to be done so that money can be spent effectively. A commission can be a multilateral lead rather than a particular agency - an Act of Parliament could be the differentiating factor than previous reform initiatives - Sharizal Shaarani
11. Anonymous Attendee - How issues are phrased is important. Globally health costs are referred to as a burden - originally to encourage more spending. Is it time we talk about investing in health like we talk about investing in education? Both crucial for development but public and politicians would never say education is a burden
12. Do remember those who work either pay taxes or are earning so little they are not but are contributing to the wealth of the country in other ways. Many are married to Malaysian and have Malaysian children
13. The frequency of health care reforms sounds like that of educational reforms. Frequent but not necessarily making things clearer.

Appendix B: List of Questions – Session 3

1. Its good to see that reduction of gender inequality as an aspect for the way forward. Has the EPU developed targets and indicators for the reduction of gender inequality in the area of inclusive economic growth.
2. The “opportunities and way forward” presented by EPU is has been discussed for a long time. Yet the situation is stagnant and worsening. What in your opinion is hindering the implementation of these “ways forward”
3. There is a clear and strong linkage between SDG 10 and SDG 5. EPU's challenges on Gender equality is on point and one way to address the root cause is to really make a step change in SDG Indicator 5.1.1 on Laws that promote gender equality. This is not just a challenge to be overcome by the Ministry of Women, Family & Community Development, but also other departments. What steps have the Govt taken or plan to undertake to address the root cause of gender equality issues?
4. In the presentation, no mention was made of the need to improve the terms and conditions of work for migrant workers, and their overall employment environment. They contribute significantly to our economic growth, yet we treat them very badly. No country can do without migrant labour, yet we seem to have left them out in the formulation of our socio-economic policies. The SDGs are not just for citizens of a country. No one left behind includes migrant workers.
5. What help does EPU need from CSOs to support addressing gender equality challenges?
6. There is urgency to plan, coordinate and rapidly follow through measures to bring back jobs (not just temporary hand outs - on the Dole) and improve economy through centrally planned and execution. Malaysia has too many layers of regulation and authority which is not working for Black Swan events like Covid-19.
7. How can we ensure we employ decolonization development towards the self-determination and socio-economic empowerment of the indigenous?
8. One challenge that is missing from the VNR is tackling corruption.
9. There is a need to remove the restrictions on employment of foreign spouses married to Malaysians, in the best interest of the family. How can we get the statement of prohibition from employment removed from their visas, in the implementation stage of SDGs to ensure that bi-national Malaysian families are not left behind, to contribute towards the family income and to the taxes and the GDP of the country?
10. Dr. Kon: has both Federal and State governments incorporated the principles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) into state land laws and development policies? How can the ‘S’ in ‘SDG’ be achieved when states repeatedly intrude into and grab land that is occupied by the Orang Asli/Asal?
11. Despite current efforts, on the ground reports reveal that people are slipping through the cracks. Recovering and rebuilding better and more resilient requires a whole of nation approach but at the level of governance, a whole of government approach and alignment is critical. What specifically needs to be in place and what do we need to do differently for a coherent whole of government approach to ensure we reach the furthest and leave no one behind? – Omna Sreeni-Ong
12. In 2019 Malaysia’s Gini Coefficient of income inequality stood at 0.40 (big income gap). What is the government's plan of action to reduce the gap?
13. In tandem with the growth of aging population and depleted savings in the EPF, what are the new measures aimed to keep them economically sustainable?
14. in rural areas such as Sarawak the delivery approach by government are contaminated with politics. Can the government mandate their relevant department to oversee the physical activities. - Nicholas Mujah

Appendix B: List of Questions – Session 4 (1/2)

1. What more can be done to protect the forests and tree cover when there is large scale deforestation and destruction of the precious rainforest which is Malaysia's contribution to global prosperity?
2. Gender has been adopted as an important component of the Climate Change discourse in the form of the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan. What has been the Government's implementation to its commitment in this regard including gender composition of Party delegations to climate change meetings, gender climate change focal points in ministries and full, meaningful and equal participation and leadership of women in all aspects of local level climate policy and action? - Omna Sreeni-Ong
3. The Malaysia VNR Report is part of our global accountability to highlight Malaysia's progress in implementing the SDGs, my question is what and how should Malaysia play a better role in the international sustainability/climate change context? What are known obstacles that can be removed to improve its engagement with wider international stakeholders?
4. The Malaysia VNR Report is part of our global accountability to highlight Malaysia's progress in implementing the SDGs, my question is what and how should Malaysia play a better role in the international sustainability/climate change context? What are known obstacles that can be removed to improve its engagement with wider international stakeholders?
5. Amidst the calamity that Covid-19 has brought onto the world, it has also reset nature, at least for the short term. Due to the drastic reduction of movements and people activity - air quality has improved, water and noise pollution lessened, Greenhouse gas emissions lowered. However, on the negative side, single-use plastics have increased. Have the effects of Covid19 been taken into consideration in the RMK12 planning and targets?"
6. Taking into account that Malaysia was seriously pushing for a piece of climate legislation to institutionalise climate change (aka Climate Change Act) within Malaysia a few years ago (almost the same period when the 2nd VNR been drafted) as a means to ensure inclusive climate action from amongst public, private and civil society sectors, do you still see the need for this piece of climate legislation? Will this address entities working in silo to address the issue?"
7. More focused efforts need to be made in Sabah and Sarawak to promote WASH (water and sanitation) which would also improve SDGs 2 and 3 on nutrition and health. How can this be scaled up.
8. China and India esp. Tamil Nadu have for the past two decades promoted a plant a tree especially among school children. One actor has personally planted and moved the planting of 370000 trees. China has now moved the borders of the Gobi desert by encroaching into the desert through planting trees.
9. Agreed with the second panel, the linkages between the SDG's goal for example when we discuss about SDG goal 12 is more focuses on the environment and climate but this SDG12 also emphasized on social equitable and economically which link with SDG1 and SDG 2.
10. How do cities and municipal councils influence local residents to view climate change as a serious crisis?
11. Inclusivity is an overarching theme of the SDGs under the Leave No One Behind. How can this be mobilised?
12. Climate Change measures / actions seem to be focused on Urban settings. What are the strategies to get Climate Change actions to be adopted by the rural folks?
13. How many Malaysians actually understand the implication fo Climate Change to our future? My own experience when talking to "the regular Rakyat" on the ground is they has difficulty telling the difference between Climate and Weather.
14. What's the point of having other type of indicators that include environment and bioD than GDP if addressing environment externalities are not embedded in policy and regulatory framework? Otherwise, there will just be another measurement tool.

Appendix B: List of Questions – Session 4 (2/2)

15. Gender has been adopted as an important component of the Climate Change discourse in the form of the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan. What has been the Government's implementation to its commitment in this regard including gender composition of Party delegations to climate change meetings, gender climate change focal points in ministries and full, meaningful and equal participation and leadership of women in all aspects of local level climate policy and action? - Omna Sreeni-Ong
16. the calamity that Covid-19 has brought onto the world, it has also reset nature, at least for the short term. Due to the drastic reduction of movements and people activity - air quality has improved, water and noise pollution lessened, Greenhouse gas emissions lowered. However, on the negative side, single-use plastics have increased. Have the effects of Covid19 been taken into consideration in the RMK12 planning and targets?"
17. We are addressing more of the downstream action recycling, etc. but changes should be considered also at the upstream which involves changes in behaviour. At present more on usage of plastic but more should be done on moving towards changing the unsustainable patterns of consumption and production patterns for government, organizations and also private sectors. In Europe due to the pandemic, they are looking at the consumer policy focussing green transition working on the right to repair as one of the right for consumer and also emphasizing on the frugal innovation for the industries in producing new products and services.
18. Despite current efforts, on the ground reports reveal that people are slipping through the cracks. Recovering and rebuilding better and more resilient requires a whole of nation approach but at the level of governance, a whole of government approach and alignment is critical. What specifically needs to be in place and what do we need to do differently for a coherent whole of government approach to ensure we reach the furthest and leave no one behind? – Omna
19. Despite Malaysia's pledge to maintain 50% of land as "Tree cover & forests", *Hutan Simpanan* are being destroyed, leading to loss of green lungs, flora & fauna habitat, flooding...Climate change is real & with us-not something in the distant future. What can the public do to prevent this?
20. Nature-based Solutions (NbS) can provide higher ROI with multiple benefits. But do we have the institutional framework to implement it? There is historical issue of government agencies in Malaysia working in silo with separate mandates and KPIs. How can we mainstream NbS across ministries and agencies? - Mohd Noor"
21. There's no synergy between agencies. And when comes to SDG12 - mainly plastic waste are being mentioned. How about other waste? - i.e.: diapers waste that is in the rise and food waste which is almost 50% of the Malaysia's waste composition.
22. especially during this pandemic that the usage of plastic and paper has increased tremendously, it comes in the form of packaging.

Appendix B: List of Questions – Session 5

1. Again, the issue here is leadership. As a nation, we clearly have the brains to put plans in place; as society, we have enough mass who are passionate enough to implement these great plans, which means, the biggest blocker is the leadership to monitor the implementation, put process in place to ensure accountability by the implementors (state, private) and leadership.
2. What do panelists think on states marketing their carbon via private markets versus going via a the more federal-led approach (REDD Plus)?
3. Why are the major stumbling blocks is the government facing to implement these fantastic plans?
4. Would any member of the panel want to comment how kicking out durian farmers from Raub in Pahang and the cutting down of a reported 15,000 durian trees promotes the SDGs?
5. What's the government's efforts to ensure no children are left behind, especially refugee, migrant and stateless children in terms of their non-discriminatory access to protection, support, services and justice?
6. The VNR 2 under goal 16 does say something about women and the law and violence against women but it is just briefly touched upon. The fact of discrimination in the law against women including in the constitution is not acknowledged nor does the VNR show any intention to remedy this. There is also no adequate legal framework for equality of women. The constitution only provides for prohibition of discrimination but imposes no obligation for positive duties to enable equality between women and men. In the area of discrimination, the constitution does not bind the private sector. What plans does the SDG road map have to remedy discrimination against that exists in the law.
7. Under Article 8(2) of the Constitution, persons with disability are not a category protected against discrimination. Do panel members find this acceptable? If no, what would they do about it?.
8. The value of technical assistance through South-South Cooperation has increased, in particular focusing on technical training and capacity building. Are there indicators on how our contribution has assisted in increasing labour skills in developing countries? Perhaps a breakdown on the number of labours involved and industries identified would be useful. Thank you.
9. Do the panel members have any comments on the need to reform the law on hate speech/promotion of xenophobia in order to promote peace?
10. I asked what plans does the SDG road map for eliminating discrimination in the law?

Appendix C: Social Media Postings – MASA (Pre-Event)

Institut Masa Depan Malaysia
Published by Suraya Yusoff · 14 July at 16:01

Greetings from MASA!

Institut MASA and the All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) will be hosting a discussion session: "Consultation on Malaysia's Second Voluntary National Review Report 2021 on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Implementation Progress".

This event is organised in conjunction with the United Nations' High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). HLPF is a forum for member states to review and present their progress on t... [See more](#)

Institut Masa Depan Malaysia
Published by Amirul Asyraf · 16 July at 16:54 · Instagram

Greetings from MASA!

Institut MASA and APPGM-SDG will be hosting a discussion session: "Consultation on Malaysia's Second Voluntary National Review Report 2021 on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Implementation Progress".
Details of event are as follows... [See more](#)

Institut Masa Depan Malaysia
Published by Suraya Yusoff · 21 July at 17:56

Greetings everyone!

The All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) and Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (MASA) will be hosting a CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW (VNR) REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS.

This event is organised to reflect on the United Nations' High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). HLPF is a forum for member states to review and present their progress on the... [See more](#)

Appendix C: Social Media Postings – MASA (Live Streaming)

 Institut Masa Depan Malaysia was live.
Published by ZOOM · 22 July at 08:58 ·

Greetings everyone!

The All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) and Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (MASA) will be hosting a CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW (VNR) REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS.

This event is organised to reflect on the United Nations' High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). HLPF is a forum for member states to review and present their progress on the... [See more](#)



 Institut Masa Depan Malaysia was live.
Published by ZOOM · 23 July at 09:02 ·

Greetings everyone!

The All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) and Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (MASA) will be hosting a CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW (VNR) REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS.

This event is organised to reflect on the United Nations' High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). HLPF is a forum for member states to review and present their progress on the... [See more](#)



Appendix C: Social Media Postings – MASA (Post-Event)



Institut Masa Depan Malaysia
Published by IG Institut Masa Depan Malaysia · 22 July at 23:50 · Instagram ·

It's a wrap for the Opening, Plenary session and Session 1 & 2 of Consultation On Malaysia's Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report 2021 On Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Implementation Progress hosted by The All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) and Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (MASA).

Special thanks to YB Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, Minister in The Prime Minister's Department (Economy) for joining and sharing a lot o... [See more](#)



Institut Masa Depan Malaysia
Published by IG Institut Masa Depan Malaysia · 23 July at 15:13 · Instagram ·

It's a wrap for Session 3,4 & 5 of Consultation On Malaysia's Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report 2021 On Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Implementation Progress hosted by The All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) and Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (MASA).

Thank you so much to everyone who participated.
May we meet again with greater topics like this in the future... [See more](#)



Appendix C: Social Media Postings – MASA (Speakers' Quotes) (1/2)

Institut Masa Depan Malaysia
Published by Suraya Yusoff · 22 July at 20:13 · Instagram

Good evening everyone!

Here's one of the keynote address quoted from the first day of the Consultation On Malaysia's Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report 2021 On Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Implementation Progress webinar.

Thank you to YB Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, Minister in The Prime Minister's Department (Economy), for sharing his thoughts with us.... See [more](#)



Institut Masa Depan Malaysia
Published by IG Institut Masa Depan Malaysia · 23 July at 19:18 · Instagram

Good evening everyone!

Here's some of the keynote addresses quoted from the second day of the Consultation On Malaysia's Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report 2021 On Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Implementation Progress webinar.

Thank you to Datuk Dr. Habibah Abdul Rahim (Adjunct Professor, UTM & Senior Fellow MASA) & Dato' Herman Abdul Hamid (Deputy Director, Equity Development Division, Economic Planning Unit) for sharing their thoughts with us.... See [more](#)



Institut Masa Depan Malaysia
Published by IG Institut Masa Depan Malaysia · 24 July at 20:01 · Instagram

Good evening everyone!

Here's some of the keynote addresses quoted from the second day of the Consultation On Malaysia's Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report 2021 On Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Implementation Progress webinar.

Thank you to YB Dr. Kelvin Yii Lee Wuen (APPGM-SDG Treasurer & MP of Bandar Kuching) & Dr. Murallitharan Munisamy (Director National Cancer Society Malaysia) for sharing their thoughts with us.... See [more](#)



Appendix C: Social Media Postings – MASA (Speakers' Quotes) (2/2)

Institut Masa Depan Malaysia
Published by IG Institut Masa Depan Malaysia · 13h · Instagram

Good evening everyone!

Here's some of the keynote addresses quoted from the second day of the Consultation On Malaysia's Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report 2021 On Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Implementation Progress webinar.

Thank you to Prof. Dr. Jamal Othman (Deputy Chairman, Akademi Profesor Malaysia & Senior Fellow MASA) & YB Tuan Ahmad Fahmi Fadzil (Member of APPGM-SDG & MP of Lembah Pantai) for sharing their thoughts with us.... See more



Institut Masa Depan Malaysia
Published by IG Institut Masa Depan Malaysia · 15h · Instagram

Good evening everyone!

Here's some of the keynote addresses quoted from the second day of the Consultation On Malaysia's Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report 2021 On Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Implementation Progress webinar.

Thank you to Dr. K. Nagulendran (Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of Environment) & Ms. Lavanya Rama Iyer (Head of Policy & Climate Change, WWF Malaysia) for sharing their thoughts with us.... See more

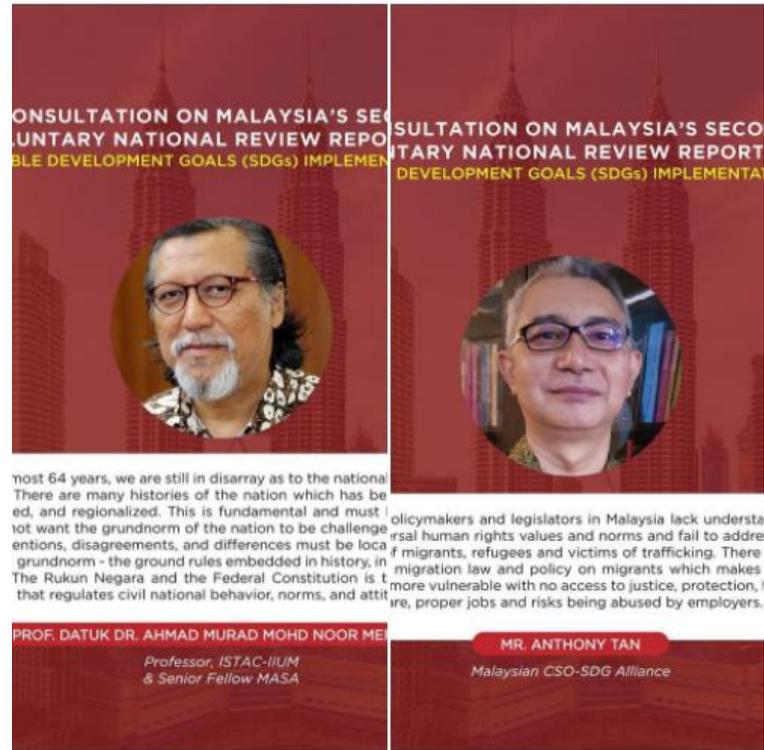


Institut Masa Depan Malaysia
Published by IG Institut Masa Depan Malaysia · 20h · Instagram

Good evening everyone!

Here's some of the keynote addresses quoted from the second day of the Consultation On Malaysia's Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report 2021 On Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Implementation Progress webinar.

Thank you to Prof. Datuk Dr. Ahmad Murad Mohd Noor Merican (Professor, ISTAC-IIUM & Senior Fellow MASA) & Mr. Anthony Tan (Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance) for sharing their thoughts with us.... See more



Appendix C: Social Media Postings – MASA (Article)

Institut Masa Depan Malaysia
 Published by IG Institut Masa Depan Malaysia · 16h · Instagram ·

Good evening everyone! 🇲🇾

Here's an original article by Mohd Noor Musa, Research Analyst (Social) from Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (MASA)

The Shared Prosperity Vision is an approach taken by Malaysia to localise the SDG set by the United Nations and adopted by all member states – that is to achieve inclusive, sustainable growth along with fair and equitable distribution across all levels by 2030 without leaving no one behind.

The Consultation on Malaysia's 2nd Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report (2021) on SDG Implementation Progress is in partnership with the Economic Planning Unit (EPU), the Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance and the UN Malaysia Country Team, aimed to provide a platform for the stakeholders, i.e. government, civil societies and private sectors opportunities to understand, review and comment on the processes Malaysia has taken on the SDG implementation; to enhance community interest and participation in localising the SDGs especially at district and local authority levels; and to promote awareness of the sustainability issues among the stakeholders.

Full article at <https://institutmasa.com/improving-our-sustainability.../>

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Sustainability Literacy

is about demonstrating one's awareness of sustainability issues and its complex relationships (i.e. economy, environment & society) and having the necessary information, knowledge, skills and mindsets that allow individuals the ability to commit, formulate and communicate sustainable solutions, vis-à-vis economy, social or environment being faced today with multidisciplinary approaches.

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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Improving Our Sustainability Literacy for Shared Prosperity

- Mohd Noor Musa, Research Analyst (Social), Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (MASA)

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Sustainable Development Report 2021

Malaysia ranks 65/165 in SDG Index Rank

Malaysia SDG Index scores 70.9%

Malaysia's Spillover Score 77.8%

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Appendix C: Social Media Postings – APPGM-SDG

APPGM-SDG
Published by Appgm Sdg · 14 July at 16:38 ·

Greetings everyone!

The All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) and Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (MASA) will be hosting a discussion session: **CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW (VNR) REPORT 2021**.

This event is organised in conjunction with the United Nations' High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). HLPF is a forum for member states to review and present their progress on the implementation of the SDGs.... [See more](#)

THU, 22 JUL
CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW (VNR) REPORT 2021

APPGM-SDG was live.
Published by ZOOM · 22 July at 09:02 ·

Greetings everyone!

The All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) and Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (MASA) will be hosting a **CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW (VNR) REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS**.

This event is organised to reflect on the United Nations' High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). HLPF is a forum for member states to review and present their progress on the... [See more](#)

32:55 / 4:12:00

APPGM-SDG was live.
Published by ZOOM · 23 July at 09:04 ·

Greetings everyone!

The All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) and Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (MASA) will be hosting a **CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW (VNR) REPORT 2021 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS**.

This event is organised to reflect on the United Nations' High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). HLPF is a forum for member states to review and present their progress on the... [See more](#)

0:03 / 4:11:55

Appendix D: Article Release (1/2)

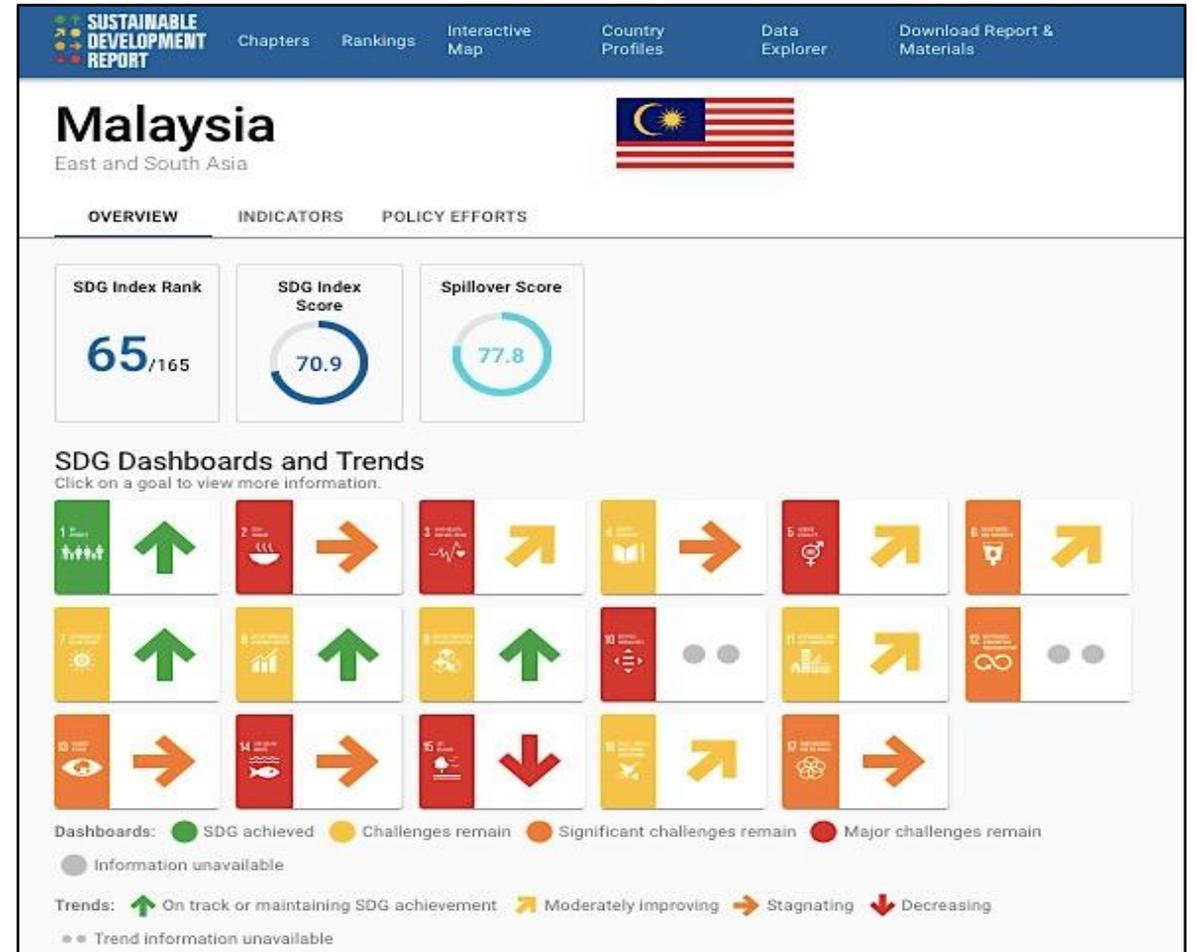
IMPROVING OUR SUSTAINABILITY LITERACY FOR SHARED PROSPERITY

by Mohd Noor Musa, *Research Analyst (Social), Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (MASA)*

2030 is less than a decade away. There is certainly much progress that Malaysia has made in recent years that the country should be proud of, upholding the principle of "leaving no one behind" and making sure that the Shared Prosperity Vision (SPV) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are more relevant and known to the rakyat.

The Shared Prosperity Vision is an approach taken by Malaysia to localise the SDG set by the United Nations and adopted by all member states – that is to achieve inclusive, sustainable growth along with fair and equitable distribution across all levels by 2030 without leaving no one behind. This includes alleviating poverty and reducing socio-economic gaps by implementing more bottom-up approaches and targeted programmes at every level of society. This cannot be achieved without commitment, understanding and literacy of the local sustainability issues faced by societies highlighted in the SPV.

Sustainability literacy is about demonstrating one’s awareness of sustainability issues and its complex relationships (i.e. economy, environment & society) and having the necessary information, knowledge, skills and mindsets that allow individuals the ability to commit, formulate and communicate sustainable solutions, vis-à-vis economy, social or environment being faced today with multidisciplinary approaches.



Appendix D: Article Release (2/2)

This is what Institut Masa Depan Malaysia (MASA) and All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) tried to achieve – by organising a 2 days Consultation on Malaysia’s 2nd Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report (2021) on SDG Implementation Progress from 22-23 July 2021. The consultation is in partnership with the Economic Planning Unit (EPU), the Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance and the UN Malaysia Country Team, aimed to provide a platform for the stakeholders, i.e. government, civil societies and private sectors opportunities to understand, review and comment on the processes Malaysia has taken on the SDG implementation; to enhance community interest and participation in localising the SDGs especially at district and local authority levels; and to promote awareness of the sustainability issues among the stakeholders.

According to The Sustainable Development Report 2021 which has just been released, Malaysia stands at number 65 of 165 countries with the SDG Index at 70.9 percent while the Spillover Index at 77.8 percent. The SDG Index measures a country's total progress towards achieving all 17 SDGs. The score can be interpreted as a percentage of SDG achievement (a score of 100 indicates that all SDGs have been achieved). The Spillover Index however, assesses spillovers along three dimensions, i.e., environmental and social impacts embodied into trade, economy and finance, and security. A higher score means that a country causes more positive and fewer negative spillover effects.

According to this year's report, Malaysia has successfully achieved one goal, namely SDG1 (no poverty); 3 goals are on track to be achieved, namely SDG7 (affordable and clean energy), SDG8 (decent work and economic growth), and SDG9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure); 5 goals have a moderate score although improving but insufficient to attain goal, namely SDG3 (good health and well-being), SDG5 (gender equality), SDG6 (clean water and sanitation), SDG11 (sustainable cities and communities), and SDG16 (peace, justice and strong institutions); 5 goals see a stagnating score, namely SDG2 (zero hunger), SDG4 (quality education), SDG13 (climate action), SDG14 (life below water), and SDG17 (partnerships for the goals); 1 goal sees the decreasing score, namely SDG15 (life on land); and 2 goals have no data available for analysis, namely SDG10 (reduced inequalities), and SDG12 (responsible consumption and production).

Also, according to the report, of the total 17 SDGs, Malaysia has achieved one SDG (SDG1), faces challenges for six SDGs (SDG4, SDG7, SDG8, SDG9, SDG11, and SDG16); faces significant challenges for four SDGs (SDG6, SDG12, SDG13, and SDG17); and faces major challenges for the remaining six SDGs (SDG2, SDG3, SDG5, SDG10, SDG14, and SDG15). All these challenges require sustainability literacy and engagement amongst the stakeholders in formulating more robust solutions and policy directions for Malaysia in the future, keeping in mind the noble goals of our SPV. Through various approaches and/or strategies such as the VNR Consultation co-organised by Institut MASA & APPGM-SDG, it offers the government, civil societies and policy-makers opportunities to talk to each other to identify areas for improvement and to highlight sustainability issues faced by the societies.

By continuous engagements, dialogues and consultations guided by the spirit of togetherness and both SDG and SPV’s shared mission of leaving no one behind, we could identify our gaps and challenges, increase our literacy on sustainability issues, develop a more comprehensive analysis of our major achievements, and together restructure our development priorities towards a prosperous, fair, equitable and inclusive manner, as envisioned by the SPV.



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