

# NEWSLETTER

Advancing Social Development  
through Community Empowerment



## APPGM-SDG

**NAVIGATING THE DIESEL CRISIS:  
STRATEGIC GRASSROOTS APPROACHES AMIDST  
LIMITED RESOURCES**

YB Tuan Rusdan Rusmi  
*Member of APPGM-SDG Committee;  
Member of Parliament for Padang Besar*

From the Parliament to the Ground Column

**Navigating the Diesel Crisis: Strategic Grassroots Approaches Amidst Limited Resources**

03

Special Feature Column

**Managing our Finances Wisely during Global Economic Uncertainties**

05

Voices from the Grassroots

**Built from the Ground Up: How Morganic Farm Redefines Grassroots Resilience**

06

# CONTENTS

Voices from the Grassroots

**Against the Tide of Crisis: Building Grassroots Resilience Through Education**

08

Event Highlights

**Small Steps, Large Impact: The Role of Grassroots Initiatives in National Food Security**

09

Event Highlights

**Pengkalan Chepa: A Hidden Treasure of Art and Heritage**

11

Event Highlights

**Women Maturing Democracy: The 2026 International Women's Day Parliamentary Celebration**

12

Event Highlights

**APPGM-SDG Delegation Outlines Strategy to Maximise Government and Corporate Partnerships**

14

**Exploring the Indigenous Community in Bandung, Indonesia as Part of the Alternatives Initiative**

15

Event Highlights

**Kop SDG Update: Strengthening Foundations and Expanding Impact**

17

**Members of Parliament on the Ground**

18

## Editorial Team:

Editor

Hirzawati Atikah Mohd Tahir

Cover & Layout Designer

Kezia Sim Kui Ting  
Hirzawati Atikah Mohd Tahir

## Follow Us for More Info



@APPGMSDGMY



APPGM-SDG Secretariat



@appgm\_sdg



@appgmsdg



## NAVIGATING THE DIESEL CRISIS: STRATEGIC GRASSROOTS APPROACHES AMIDST LIMITED RESOURCES

By YB Tuan Rushdan Rusmi  
(Member of APPGM-SDG Committee;  
Member of Parliament for Padang Besar)

In an increasingly challenging economic climate, the fuel price crisis—particularly regarding diesel—has had a direct and profound impact on the heartbeat of the people's lives. This price hike is not merely a figure at the petrol pump; it spreads as a domino effect across the entire economic chain: from logistics costs and food prices to the very ability of citizens to sustain their daily lives with dignity.

As a Member of Parliament, especially one in the opposition bloc without a constituency allocation, I am not exempt from feeling this pressure. In reality, a significant portion of my salary is utilised to assist the people and mobilise community programmes. Under such circumstances, it is only honest to admit that I, too, am affected; in fact, I feel the weight of the burden currently shared by the people very deeply. Previously, I chose a diesel vehicle as a cost-saving measure, yet in the current situation, that choice no longer provides the relief it once did.

In the face of these severe constraints, what strategic approaches can be mobilised at the grassroots level to confront this crisis collectively? Though, in my view, such measures should have long been initiated in response to the energy crisis.

### First: Strengthening Community Economies Based on Local Needs

People at the grassroots level must be mobilised

towards a more self-reliant community economic model. Initiatives such as local cooperatives, micro-farming, and resource sharing can reduce dependency on supply chains impacted by fuel costs. Community farming, for example, not only help save on food costs but also reduce the need for long-distance transportation. Everything remains within the local community sphere.

In this context, the role of the All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) becomes highly significant. This platform can serve as a bridge between policymakers and grassroots communities in designing local economic models aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

### Second: Shared Mobility and Integrated Savings

This crisis demands a lifestyle change. The concept of "carpooling," shared vehicle usage, and the restructuring of daily travel schedules can significantly reduce fuel consumption. Although not all locations are suitable, it is worth attempting. In rural areas, this approach can be coordinated through village committees or residents' associations to ensure more systematic implementation.



APPGM-SDG can also play a role by promoting sustainable mobility models at the community level, including the integration of micro-public transport and the use of technology to optimise travel.

### Third: Digitalisation and the Reduction of Physical Movement

In the era of technology, many transactions can be shifted to digital platforms. Small traders can leverage online marketing to reduce operating costs, while official matters can be minimised through the use of applications and online systems. Every trip avoided represents direct savings for the people.

Through APPGM-SDG initiatives, digital literacy training and support for micro-entrepreneurs can be expanded, ensuring that the people are not left behind in a new, more efficient economy that relies less on physical mobility.

### Fourth: Social Solidarity and Welfare Networks

In times of economic pressure, true strength lies in community solidarity. Community kitchen programmes, local welfare funds, and targeted assistance through NGO networks and volunteers must be empowered. Even when official allocations are unavailable, the collective strength of the community is capable of filling those gaps. This brings to mind the "*Kita jaga kita*" (We take care of each other) sentiment of the past.

APPGM-SDG, with its cross-party and cross-sector network, is capable of coordinating these efforts more systematically. The "whole-of-society" approach advocated can ensure that aid reaches target groups more efficiently and transparently, in line with SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

However, while the people strive to adapt, the government cannot evade its significant responsibility in managing perceptions and policies transparently. Misleading statements only add insult to injury regarding the people's anxieties. The narrative suggesting that the people are ungrateful for aid such as BUDI95 is uncalled for, as the reality on the ground shows that the true impact stems from the rise in diesel prices, which drives a comprehensive increase in costs.

Furthermore, the reduction of the usage limit from 300 litres to 200 litres raises questions regarding the consistency and fairness of the policy. The people have the right to understand the rationale behind every decision, rather than simply being asked to accept it without a thorough explanation.

Comparisons with neighbouring countries like Thailand are also inevitable. While that country is able to lower diesel prices, Malaysia has taken the opposite path. At the same time, the price gap between Sabah, Sarawak, and Peninsular Malaysia further fuels public anxiety. Why is this so? Questions of regional justice and the effectiveness of subsidy management must be answered with facts, not rhetoric.

Ultimately, this crisis demands honesty from all parties. The people do not demand perfection, but they expect clarity, justice, and empathy. As a representative of the people, I will not pretend that this situation is easy. Instead, I stand with the people and feel the very same pulse of hardship.

My advice to the people: we may not be able to change policy overnight, but we can strengthen our collective resilience. In hardship, we build strength. Under pressure, we give birth to solidarity.

And to the government: listen to the voices of the people with an open heart. This crisis is not just an economic test, but a test of trust. If not managed wisely, it could erode confidence in a way that is difficult to restore.

Indeed, by leveraging platforms such as APPGM-SDG and the strength of the grassroots, this country still has the space to navigate this crisis in a wiser, more inclusive, and resilient manner.





## MANAGING OUR FINANCES WISELY DURING GLOBAL ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTIES

“Be prudent, learn to be thrifty, and save,” is the advice Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim has shared with us all. “We do not know how long this economic situation will last. Manage your finances wisely, because if a more serious crisis occurs, it won't be easy to resolve.”

A similar sentiment was echoed by the Economy Minister, Akmal Nasrullah Mohd Nasir, who recently noted that the impact of the global supply crisis is increasingly felt across transportation, logistics, commodity prices, and daily expenses.

This timely advice from our leadership can be distilled into several practical guidelines for collective action:

- First, practice prudent and thrifty spending. We must avoid wasteful habits and curb extravagant or uncontrolled expenditure.
- Second, embrace energy conservation and flexible working arrangements. Citizens are encouraged to manage fuel consumption effectively, adopt Work-from-Home (WFH) strategies where possible, and reduce electricity consumption.
- Third, support local goods and homegrown entrepreneurs. By prioritising local products, we strengthen our domestic economy and build long-term resilience.

As Malaysian citizens, we are urged to remain united, regardless of political, ethnic, or religious differences. We must safeguard our national security and stability, working collectively to support local communities and the economy during this challenging period.

“What we are currently facing is no longer a short-term shock. This is not merely an issue of oil prices; it has evolved into a global supply crisis that affects energy costs, logistics, raw materials, food, services, and ultimately, the daily lives of the people.”



- Economy Minister Akmal Nasrullah Mohd Nasir  
(BERNAMA, 21 April 2026)



“The Government will not stand idly by in facing increasingly complex global crises. Every step taken is targeted, guided by the interests of the people, and ensures that Malaysia remains prepared, resilient, and not exposed to energy supply shocks.”

- Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim  
(X, 21 April 2026)



# BUILT FROM THE GROUND UP: HOW MORGANIC FARM REDEFINES GRASSROOTS RESILIENCE



discipline—so labour is used effectively and waste is minimise. During an oil-linked cost shock, efficiency becomes a form of survival.



When the global oil crisis pushed up the prices of fuel, transport, fertiliser, and basic farm supplies, many grassroots farms and community projects felt the impact immediately. In Sarawak, we saw a common pattern: higher input costs reduced planting activities, logistics became more expensive, and farmers became more cautious because the risk of loss felt bigger than the chance of gain. For Morganic Farm, this period reinforced a belief we have built over more than a decade—resilience is not something you declare during crisis; it is something you design into your system long before the crisis arrives.

However, Morganic Farm’s story is not only about our own farm. A major proof point came through the Betong Transformation Project under ITT. Over one year of involvement, we supported the transformation of a farm operation that needed stronger systems, clearer governance, and better on-ground capability. The goal was not just higher output, but a farm that can continue operating when external costs rise and supply chains become unstable.

Morganic Farm is a myOrganic-certified farm in Sarawak with over 12 years of experience in sustainable agriculture, autoecology, and community development. Our resilience strategy is practical and disciplined: reduce dependency on external inputs by strengthening the farm ecosystem itself. We invest heavily in compost and bio-input development, turning local organic materials into stable soil amendments and learning to manage fertility through biology, not expensive imported chemicals. This approach gradually lowers planting input costs and improves soil structure, water holding capacity, and overall crop stability. At the same time, we standardise operations with clear procedures—plot-based planning, routine monitoring, and record



We began by reforming and training a new operations team, setting clear roles, work routines, and accountability so the farm could run consistently without relying on a few individuals. We then provided landscape advisory to protect production—

Voices from the Grassroots

field layout, access routes, water flow, and drainage priorities—because in tropical agriculture, production stability depends on how the land is managed as much as what is planted. Next, we carried out soil refinement and treatment work, applying practical steps to rebuild soil health and reduce dependency on costly external fertiliser. Finally, we established farm SOPs and an environmental policy to ensure the improvements could be sustained after the transformation period. SOPs made quality repeatable; environmental governance ensured decisions stayed responsible, even as conditions changed.



Because our farming model is built around stable local inputs and disciplined operations, we are currently able to keep our farm product market prices stable, while remaining alert to the “effective period” of each strategy and adjusting when required. In the end, the oil crisis revealed something important: **grassroots resilience is built from the ground up—through healthy soil, strong teams, clear procedures, and community knowledge that can stand when the world becomes uncertain.**

*By Chua Tok Siew  
(APPGM-SDG Solution Provider)*



YAYASAN  
HASANAH  
KEMENTERIAN KEWANGAN  
MALAYSIA

# NAVIGATING LEGAL PLURALISM & NATIVE LAND LAW IN SARAWAK:

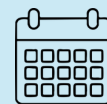
## A LECTURE BY PROF. DR. RAMY BULAN

### Background

Sarawak’s legal landscape is characterised by legal pluralism—the coexistence of multiple legal systems within the same social space, particularly statutory law and indigenous customary law. This duality is most evident in the governance of Native Customary Rights (NCR) land, where formal legal frameworks intersect with long-standing community-based norms and practices such as recorded in APPGM-SDG’s issue mapping process. While legal pluralism is a defining feature of Sarawak, it is not always well understood across stakeholders. Differences in interpretation, recognition, and application often lead to gaps in policy implementation and challenges on the ground.

### Objective

This session aims to deepen understanding and identify issues of Legal Pluralism in the Sarawak context by examining the evolution and current state of native land law and NCR recognition, while contextualising these legal frameworks against on-the-ground realities identified through APPGM-SDG’s issue mapping such as intercultural and intergenerational issues that are rooted and embodied in environmental governance, access rights, and land and resource management.



**19 MAY 2026**  
**8.30 AM - 12.30 PM**



**zoom**

**Register Now**





# AGAINST THE TIDE OF CRISIS: BUILDING GRASSROOTS RESILIENCE THROUGH EDUCATION



The global oil crisis is a major challenge that has had a profound impact on the world economy, including Malaysia. The rise in fuel prices has increased the cost of living, affected job opportunities, and placed pressure on society, particularly the grassroots. In this situation, grassroots resilience is vital to ensuring that the community is able to face and overcome upcoming challenges with greater endurance and creativity.

I, Abdul Muiz Bin Abd Halim, am a bachelor's degree holder from Mutah University, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. I once served as a school teacher; however, I made the major decision to leave that career to explore broader opportunities to assist the community. With the support and assistance of APPGM-SDG, I successfully opened an education centre as an initial step in building grassroots resilience through education.

The global oil crisis has actually opened up avenues for me to contribute more actively. Through the established education centre, I strive to produce more high-quality teachers and students. Education is seen as an essential foundation in building a knowledgeable, skilled, and self-reliant society, even when facing bitter economic challenges. With sufficient teaching staff, more students can be guided toward achieving success.

In addition, I am also creating various job opportunities to help more Malaysians secure a stable source of income. This effort not only reduces unemployment rates but also improves the standard of living for the local community. Starting with just one education centre, I have now successfully expanded this initiative to five branches. This success would not have been possible without the continuous support of APPGM-SDG.

Despite the various challenges and trials faced throughout this journey, I remain steadfast and do not give up easily. Every up and down has become a valuable experience in maturing myself and strengthening my spirit to continue serving the community. I am deeply grateful and would like to thank APPGM-SDG for the opportunity and trust given.



In conclusion, I hope that APPGM-SDG will continue to support this noble effort so that more groups affected by the global oil crisis can be assisted. Grassroots resilience is the key to ensuring that society continues to progress and remains capable of facing any future challenges. Thank you, APPGM-SDG.



*By Abdul Muiz Abd Halim  
(APPGM-SDG Solution Provider)*

5 2 APR 2026



## WHERE RESILIENCE BEGINS AT THE GRASSROOTS: SMALL STEPS, LARGE IMPACT IN STRENGTHENING FOOD SECURITY

Lately, food security has become a bigger conversation. Globally and locally. Amid ongoing geopolitical tensions, supply chain disruptions, and rising costs, it is clear that our food systems are under pressure.

I was recently involved in a Roundtable Discussion (RTD) titled “Strengthening Food Security Resilience in Uncertain Times,” organised by ECKL at Royal Lake Club, Kuala Lumpur on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2026, where I shared some of the challenges we are seeing from the community perspective. Rising input costs, increasing petrol prices, and the cost of transporting goods are real concerns. These are not just figures but they directly affect how communities produce food and sustain their livelihoods.

During the discussion, I shared and found myself reflecting on one of my visits to Dalat, Sarawak in 2024. I remember having to cross the river just to get to the other side of the village. It wasn't far, just a short ride but even then, it made me think.



If this already requires a boat, what about other rural areas that take hours to reach?

How do they bring in farming inputs?  
How do they transport their produce out?  
And how much does that cost them, daily?

These are the realities that are often not visible in larger discussions.

During that same visit, we looked at a ginger fertigation project. What stood out to me was how the system was built. Instead of being on the ground, the polybags were arranged on raised structures made from *Belian* wood. A valuable timber from Sarawak. Strong, durable, and commonly used in the area.

The reason was simple. The village is located near the river and when the water level rises, the ground becomes vulnerable.



I remember noticing the difference in the wood. The newer structures were lighter in colour while the older ones had turned much darker over time. It was a small detail but it stayed with me. It showed how these structures were not temporary solutions but something built to adapt to their environment over time.

It made me realise that resilience for many communities, is not just about adopting new technology. It is about adapting to their surroundings, using what is available, and making it work.

From what I've seen working with food security projects, resilience doesn't always start with big systems. Sometimes, it starts small.

I remember during the International Women's Day programme at Parliament Malaysia, there was one moment that lasted with me. Mak Minah, 75, stood at the centre holding a tray of paddy she grew herself. She came in her own style. Headwrap, bright tudung. Simple but confident.



She wasn't there just to attend. She came with her harvest.

Mak Minah is part of a community initiative led by a solution provider, Ms Azlini, from Pasoh, Jelebu, Negeri Sembilan, where what started as a homestay activity slowly grew into something bigger. Today, the community has 84 koperasi members, guided by the idea of "1 kebun, 1 homestay," supported by a shared 1.6 acre space and local products ranging from crops to handicrafts.

Some of the paddy is grown using containers or polybags. I know this approach may not resonate with everyone. But for me, the thought of it is powerful and it shows that food production can still happen, even with limited space, when communities are given the opportunity to try.

And that's where I think resilience really begins.

From what the solution provider shared, the biggest challenge was never infrastructure or funding. It was restoring belief within the community. Many had long felt that small scale efforts would not generate income or were simply not worth pursuing.

But slowly, that mindset began to shift.

Today, the community is no longer just participating, they are leading. Women are managing homestays and farms, elderly like Mak Minah remain actively involved, and the community is producing, hosting, and generating income together.

Support from APPGM-SDG played an important role in strengthening these efforts. But more importantly, it gave the community confidence that what they were doing mattered.

So when we talk about strengthening food security resilience, I think it's important we don't only focus on large scale solutions. Those are necessary but we should also recognise the smaller, community driven efforts that are already making a difference.

Because in the end, food security is not just about systems, policies, or technology.

It is about people.

And sometimes, resilience looks like a 75 years old woman bringing her harvest to Parliament.

*By Nur Farah Ezzaty Abd Aziz  
(Project Management Department)*

## GET YOUR STORIES FEATURED



Want us to feature your ground stories?  
Submit your stories now for a chance to be  
featured in our next issue!





3-5 APR 2026



## PENKALAN CHEPA: A HIDDEN TREASURE OF ART AND HERITAGE

Pengkalan Chepa is an area rich in unique customs and deep-rooted cultural heritage. Through the issue mapping process in the Pengkalan Chepa Parliament, researchers discovered various hidden attractions with significant potential for promotion. One of the primary heartbeats of this area is traditional craftsmanship, particularly the wau (traditional kite) industry, which has endured for over 50 years and continues to be a major draw for visitors. Additionally, the beauty of traditional batik canting around Pantai Cahaya Bulan showcases mesmerizing flora and fauna motifs, reflecting the well-preserved artistic identity of the local community.

The appeal of the area is further strengthened by its culinary diversity and strong community spirit. Its location near the coastline allowed researchers to enjoy various fresh seafood-based dishes, such as squid and oysters. Furthermore, the value of community unity is highly evident through the tradition of 'rewang' or communal work in preparing feasts for local residents. These unique traits are

enriched by intriguing local historical narratives, such as the origins of the name Pulau Gajah and tales of Raja Kundur's warriors. Moreover, the intricate artworks produced by the inmates of Pengkalan Chepa Prison prove that art here is not just for display, but serves as a medium to instill appreciation for individual talent, even behind bars.

Overall, Pengkalan Chepa holds a thousand secrets that go beyond its image as an air transport hub. While primarily known for its airport, the area is actually a "gem" brimming with musical arts like *dikir barat*, *silat tari* art, and valuable handicrafts. The three-day mapping experience proved that the cultural, historical, and human values present in Pengkalan Chepa are vital assets that must be cherished and popularised to ensure the sustainability of our national identity.



By Dr. Siti Nur Ain Zakinuddin  
(Head of the East Coast Zone)



7 APR 2026



## WOMEN MATURING DEMOCRACY: THE 2026 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY PARLIAMENTARY CELEBRATION



The 2026 International Women's Day Celebration at the Parliament level was successfully held on 7 April 2026 at the Banquet Hall, Main Block, Parliament of Malaysia. The programme was a strategic collaboration between the Parliament of Malaysia, the All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia-Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG), APPGM-Gender Equality, the Ministry of Finance, and Yayasan Hasanah, under the theme "Women Maturing Democracy." This initiative was organised to strengthen the role of women as catalysts for a more inclusive, just, and resilient democratic development.

The programme brought together a wide range of stakeholders, including policymakers, solution partners, civil society organisations, and communities on a strategic platform. The event was officiated by YB Puan Alice Lau Kiong Yieng, Deputy Speaker of the Dewan Rakyat, who also launched a book titled "From Ground to Greatness: Malaysian Grassroots Transformations Under APPGM-SDG." This launch symbolised recognition of grassroots development efforts that have delivered significant impact to society, particularly to women.

The celebration was further enlivened by exhibition booths presented by APPGM-SDG solution partners, showcasing various community development initiatives. The exhibition provided participants with the opportunity to gain first-hand insight into programme implementation on the ground and its impact on community well-being, particularly in empowering women at the grassroots level.

One of the key highlights of the programme was a panel session titled "Women as an Institution: Challenges and the Future." The session was moderated by Ms. Kasthuriraani Patto (DAP Secretary for International Affairs) and featured a distinguished panel comprising YB Dato' Hajah Mumtaz Md Nawī (Member of Parliament for Tumpat), Ms. Sridayu Samsuri (Chairperson of the Kuantan Women Inspiration Association (WINK)), Ms. Juddy Lacijs (Managing Director of Moyog Innovation Centre), and Ms. Puvaneswari Subramaniam (Managing Director of Godigital Production).



The discussion focused on the role of women as social institutions capable of shaping communities, influencing policy, and driving national development. Among the key messages highlighted was that a mature democracy does not merely provide space for women to be present, but ensures that they are safe, respected, and heard.



In addition, a workshop titled “Gender Bias and Violence: Challenges to Inclusive Democracy” was conducted by Ms. Nazreen Nizam and Ms. Aina Fatiha Mohd Amin from the Women’s Aid Organisation (WAO). The workshop emphasised that gender bias and violence against women are not isolated issues; rather, they reflect how systems and institutions function in protecting women’s rights and safety. The discussion also outlined the need for a more holistic approach, including prevention, protection, and social justice.



Overall, the celebration succeeded in raising awareness and strengthening discourse on gender equality and inclusive democracy. It also served as an important platform in bridging the gap between policymakers and communities, while opening greater opportunities for more effective collaboration in the future. A mature democracy is not only inclusive, but also ensures justice and safety for all levels of society.

*By Dr. Nur Fatimah Tajul Ariffin  
(Policy Solutions Department)*



# JUST LAUNCHED



**From Ground to Greatness: Malaysian Grassroots Transformations Under APPGM-SDG** brings together real stories of grassroots transformation from across Malaysia under the APPGM-SDG initiative. Through three interconnected parts — Community Learning Centres, Building Inclusive Community, and Youths for Building an Inclusive Community — this book captures how local action can strengthen livelihoods, deepen social cohesion, and shape future leaders.





7 APR 2026



## APPGM-SDG DELEGATION OUTLINES STRATEGY TO MAXIMISE GOVERNMENT AND CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

APPGM-SDG held a courtesy call to YB Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan, Finance Minister II at Ministry of Finance, Putrajaya on 7 April 2026.

The meeting was held to present the SDG localisation efforts undertaken by APPGM-SDG via its committee and secretariat at multiple level. The presentation includes the methodology from grassroots needs to Parliament level policy advocacy, multi-stakeholders initiatives, specific thematic policy level interventions, and future efforts on grassroots empowerment.

The minister acknowledged the sustainable 6 years efforts by APPGM-SDG in grassroots empowerment through the SDG Localisation agenda via the Malaysian Parliament.

The minister also suggested areas of collaboration for APPGM-SDG, moving forward to maximise impact.



He suggested to have effective collaboration and learning with government agencies, mainly agencies with grant opportunities such as Implementation Coordination Unit (ICU) for Sejati MADANI to maximise collaboration with APPGM-SDG partners, promoting government assistance programme which the ministers office has gracefully complied to the APPGM-SDG grassroots leaders network and the need for APPGM-SDG to spearhead partnership with corporates and private sector to access alternative funding for grassroots organisations to undertake grassroots empowerment initiatives. These suggestions are in line with the SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) in order to achieve holistic social development.

The APPGM-SDG delegation was led by Head of Secretariat Prof. Datuk Dr. Denison Jayasooria together with Rachel Tan, Siti Hajar, Dr. Teo Lee Ken and Paniirselvam.

*By Paniirselvam Jayaraman  
(Policy Solutions Department)*

9 11 - 17 APR 2026



## EXPLORING THE INDIGENEOUS COMMUNITY IN BANDUNG, INDONESIA AS PART OF THE ALTERNATIVES INITIATIVE

Hirzawati Atikah was invited to participate in the Second Global Tapestry of Alternatives (GTA) Assembly held in Bandung as part of Movement Movement for Alternatives and Solidarity in Southeast Asia (MASSA). This assembly was co-organised by Konfederasi Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia (KPRI) and MASSA and seen participants from various countries, covering Asia and Latin America, and from various organisations and communities.

One of the agenda of the assembly was to visit the one of the Sunda Wiwitan Communities in Indonesia, called Kasepuhan Cigugur located in the Cigugur Kuningan village, West Java, a four-hour journey from our venue in Lembang, Bandung. Our first stop was the Paseban Tri Panca Tunggal, a place known as a centre of Sundanese culture that still upholds ancestral customs (their belief is called 'Madraism" or *Agama Jawa Sunda*) since 1848 amidst modernisation. The community is also a symbol of diversity, tolerance, and local wisdom at the foot of Mount Ciremai. Despite so, Sunda Wiwitan is not being recognised as one of the indigenous communities in Indonesia and still facing governmental and societal discrimination due to its different belief.



The community welcomed us at the Paseban Tri Panca Tunggal.

The community has been resisting forced labour, maintaining their agricultural culture and caring for the water, mountains, and environment. To this day, this community continues to fight alongside youth and community groups against geothermal projects that threaten their living space and ancestral land.



A photo with the Queen, Ratu Emalia Wigarningsih and the Prince, Pangeran Gumirat Barna Alam.

After lunch at the Paseban, the group proceeded to Sagarahieng by van, as the narrow roads were inaccessible to buses. Located in the Darma District of Kuningan Regency, West Java, Sagarahieng is an agro-tourism village renowned for its ancient historical sites and breath-taking natural scenery on the slopes of Mount Gegerhalang, at the foot of Mount Ciremai. Often referred to as the "Sea of the Gods," the site requires a 10-minute hike, which participants completed barefoot as a gesture of respect for the sacred grounds.

This village is home to the oldest megalithic site, the Sang Hiang site, which contains ancient stones, including lingga yoni, menhirs, dolmens, and Nandi statues, dating from the 7th to 8th centuries AD.



Reaching the Sang Hiang site after a 10-minute hike.

The Cipari Archaeological Park Museum Site, located 20 minutes away from Sagarahiung demonstrates a unique blend of the Neolithic and Megalithic periods. The discovery of bronze artifacts indicates significant technological developments, while the presence of large stones indicates the community's spiritual belief in ancestors. It also indicates that the people of that era not only possessed advanced agricultural skills but also possessed a fairly complex social structure.

There are a few altars where visitors can meditate or hold discussions, influenced by the unique sound frequencies echoing through the neatly arranged stones. These stones were placed solely by women, who were required to remain completely silent during the arrangement to respect the tradition.



One of the Queen's children performing a ritual at an altar.

### The Assembly

Following a full-day field visit to Kuningan, the assembly proceeded with its primary agenda over the remaining five days. The programme was densely packed with group deliberations, plenary sessions, and deep reflections. Participants from varied global backgrounds shared lived experiences of community resistance, highlighting common struggles: the defense of ancestral lands, the fight against genocide and oppression, and the advocacy for indigenous rights. Central to these discussions was the protection of indigenous rights and "Mother Earth," as well as exploring how these challenges can be addressed through Constructive Alternatives.

There were six thematic areas discussed within the GTA component: education, food, healing, governance, economy, and energy. Within the 'Economy' group, the focus was on the solidarity economy. I took the opportunity to share our progress regarding the ASEAN SDG-SSE Roadmap. There was a collective consensus that a global network or assembly is essential to promote this economic model and empower the communities involved.

### The Experience

Joining this assembly is an experience for me. While it shared similarities with the MASSA Assembly held in Siem Reap last year, this gathering extended its reach far beyond Southeast Asia. The description of the GTA as a "network of networks" is indeed accurate; it was a privilege to hear stories from different countries such as Kurdistan, Mexico, and various African nations, each representing the unique struggles and triumphs of their local communities.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Dr. Eri Trinurini Adhi (Asian Solidarity Economy Council, ASEC) and MASSA for giving me the opportunity to be involved in the Alternatives movement.

*By Hirzawati Atikah Mohd Tahir  
(Corporate Communication Unit)*

### About GTA

The Global Tapestry of Alternatives (GTA) is a process, launched in 2019, seeking to create solidarity networks and strategic alliances amongst all these existing and emerging alternatives on local, regional and global levels. It locates itself in connecting and nurturing interactions, learning experiences and collaborations among alternatives. It operates through varied and light structures, defined in each space, that are horizontal, democratic, inclusive and distributed, using diverse local languages and multiple ways of communicating. The initiative has no central structure or control mechanisms, but aspires to horizontal, democratic and grounded functioning. Importantly, GTA is grounded in the concepts and practice of Indigenous peoples and other local communities and collectives.

10

7 APR 2026



## KOP SDG UPDATE: STRENGTHENING FOUNDATIONS AND EXPANDING IMPACT

Koperasi Matlamat Pembangunan Lestari Berhad (Kop SDG) continues to make steady progress in strengthening its role as a platform for community-based economic development. As of the latest update, Kop SDG has a total of 24 registered members, comprising primarily APPGM-SDG's Solution Providers, who are actively implementing impactful grassroots projects nationwide.

The Financial Year 2025 has officially concluded on 31 January 2026, marking an important milestone in establishing the cooperative's operational and governance foundations. Building on this, Kop SDG has outlined several key priorities for Financial Year 2026, focusing on both growth and sustainability. These include strengthening the strategic partnership with potential partners, reviewing and amending the cooperative's by-laws to enhance governance, expanding membership, organising Tamu SDG 2026 across zones and regions, and further strengthening internal operations.

In parallel, Kop SDG has made encouraging strides in digital engagement through its branding initiative, Lestari Malaysia. Across Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, the platforms have collectively reached 2,338 followers within two months, reflecting growing public interest in community-driven SDG initiatives. Content performance has been particularly strong, with an Instagram feature on Kop SDG member Sean Lim achieving over 30,000 views and 1,200 likes. On TikTok, a feature on Izdihar Janna, a beneficiary of a project led by Kop SDG member and GAPS founder Ms. Rafidah Ahmad, surpassed 100,000 views and 11,000 likes. Notably, this exposure generated a spillover effect, contributing to over 700 new followers on GAPS' own social media platforms.

Looking ahead, Kop SDG is actively expanding its income-generating initiatives (IG) to support members and enhance cooperative sustainability. Among the key initiatives is the introduction of a dropship and profit-sharing model for product sales during upcoming events, including Tamu SDG programmes across various zones and regions. This approach is expected to improve market access for community products while ensuring fair returns to participating members.

Additionally, Kop SDG is exploring opportunities to supply curated products and doorgift hampers for APPGM-SDG, to be distributed across its headquarters, as well as zone and regional offices. This initiative not only creates a steady demand channel for member products but also enhances visibility for community-based enterprises.

The cooperative is also leveraging Lestari Malaysia as a platform to provide social media coverage services for Solution Providers (SP), Members of Parliament (MP), and other stakeholders. Furthermore, Kop SDG plans to develop and deliver training programmes and modules in collaboration with SPs who are subject matter experts, thereby creating additional revenue streams while strengthening knowledge-sharing within the ecosystem.

Overall, Kop SDG is entering its next phase with a clear focus on scaling impact, strengthening partnerships, and building a sustainable cooperative model that empowers communities across Malaysia.

*By Mohammad Shazie Zaini Mohd Shahril Firdaus Siva  
(Koperasi Matlamat Pembangunan Lestari Berhad)*



We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the Members of Parliament for their unwavering cooperation and commitment. Throughout the month, APPGM-SDG has had the privilege of engaging with various parliamentary constituencies through various meeting and events such as the formal handover of the Preliminary Report of Policy Interventions (a collaboration between Yayasan Hasanah and APPGM-SDG), official events and more. These milestones were made possible through the dedicated efforts between the Members of Parliament and APPGM-SDG. We value this synergy between policy and grassroots action, and we look forward to further strengthening our partnership to advance the Sustainable Development Goals across Malaysia.

# READ OUR PICTORIAL SITE VISIT REPORTS

Featuring 2026 five parliamentary constituencies:

Read Now




Reports are in Malay Language




# APPGM-SDG



**Persatuan Promosi Matlamat Pembangunan Lestari  
(PPM-023-14-07012020)**

 A-1-10, Blok A, Pusat Perniagaan Seksyen 8, Jalan Sg. Jernih 8/1,  
46050 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.

 [secretariat@appgm-sdg.com](mailto:secretariat@appgm-sdg.com)

 <https://www.facebook.com/APPGMSDGMY>

 <https://appgm-sdg.com/>