September 2026 | No. 09/2026 https://appgm-sdg.com

NEWSLETTER

Advancing Social Development through Community Empowerment









Neighbourhood Iniatiatives

In Collaboration with

APPGM-SDG

KEMENTERIAN KEWANGAN MALAYSIA

YAYASAN HASANAH
A foundation of Khazanah Nasional



GRASSROOTS IN ACTION: HOW THE PKK PROGRAMME IS TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES FROM WITHIN

YB Tuan Prabakaran M Parameswaran
Member of Parliament for Batu

From the Parliament to the Ground Column

Grassroots in Action: How the PKK Programme is Transforming Communities from Within 03

Special Feature Column

From Local Neighourboods to Policy Impact: Fostering Resilience, Unity, and Sustainability 05

Voices from the Grassroots

From Passive Beneficiaries to Active Partners: How Grassroots Leadership is Transforming Kampung Tilis 07

CONTENTS

Voices from the Grassroots

How Grassroots Leadership and Youth Empowerment Are Driving Change in Pakan, Sarawak 09

Voices from the Grassroots

Empowering Gua Musang's Second Generation: Community Leadership and Economic Resilience in KESEDAR 11

Voices from the Grassroots

From Waste to Wealth: How Women's Leadership in Taman Dato' Harun Is Driving Community Resilience 13

Voices from the Grassroots

Empowering Langkawi's Communities: Local Leadership, Women's Empowerment, and Sustainable Action 15

Voices from the Grassroots

Leading Together with the Community: How Taman Angkasa Nuri Builds a Resilient, Inclusive, and Active Neighbourhood 17

Event Highlights

RISE 2026 Northern Zone: Strengthening Solution Providers for Greater Community Impact 19

Event Highlights

Grassroots Leaders Honoured at the 5th Malaysia Sustainability Leadership Summit 21

Members of Parliament on the Ground 23

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

1



GRASSROOTS IN ACTION: HOW THE PKK PROGRAMME IS TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES FROM WITHIN



By YB Tuan Prabakaran M Parameswaran
(Member of Parliament for Batu)

The Neighbourhood and Leadership Programme (PKK) is an initiative designed to empower neighbourhood communities at the grassroots level. Organised by APPGM-SDG, it aligns with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to advance local communities in a sustainable manner. These neighbourhood programmes are held locally in collaboration with neighbourhood leaders who form a programme execution committee drawn from the residents themselves. The PPR Beringin and PPR Batu Muda neighbourhoods are among two of the 50 participating locations nationwide.

The PKK hosted in these areas are structured around five primary themes: the first theme focuses on Leadership and Neighbourhood; the second on Happy Family Development; the third on Child and Youth Development; and the fourth and fifth focus on policy intervention, namely Citizens' Rights Education and the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP).

The Leadership and Neighbourhood theme equips committee members and residents with the skills to lead their areas through a spirit of cooperation. The Happy Family Development theme encourages residents to practice core values and affection within their households, thereby fostering closer bonds between neighbouring families to create cheerful, happy communities. Meanwhile, the Child and Youth Development theme focuses on the future of the younger generation, preparing them to succeed in all aspects of life in line with national development goals.

The Policy Intervention programmes—Citizens' Rights Education and the 13MP, in collaboration with MySDG Centre for Social Inclusion—introduce neighbourhood communities to their constitutional rights, legal protections, and the role of national policies in advancing individuals, families, and local areas within mainstream national development. These interventions motivate local communities to participate actively in implementing and safeguarding government policies at the neighborhood level. Through these programmes, the development of safe, environmentally friendly physical infrastructure goes hand-in-hand with cultivating a high-quality mindset.

Although organised with modest funding allocations, the execution of these programmes in local neighbourhoods has delivered a high impact. The PKK successfully enhances leadership spirit across the community. Residents have begun connecting with existing neighbourhood leadership committees and stepping forward to volunteer. Furthermore, through the Leadership and Neighbourhood initiatives, local leaders and residents from diverse religious, social, economic, and political backgrounds come together to build stronger relationships.





Implementing programmes centred on Leadership, Family Development, and Child and Youth Development creates space to revive a community-centred way of life. Working collaboratively through *gotong-royong* (communal cooperation) reinforces neighbourly ties among multi-ethnic families, yielding a highly positive impact on unity as a foundational formula for national development. Residents gain a deeper appreciation for cooperation and the principles of the *Rukun Negara* as essential elements of a healthy, wholesome lifestyle.

Through the policy intervention tracks, residents have begun voluntarily taking responsibility for their surroundings. Youth are utilising the avenues provided by leadership committees to help oversee and improve safety, infrastructure, public amenities, and government social services. Communities are becoming aware of their rights as citizens and their role in advancing their residential areas. Individually and as families, residents are joining collective leadership committees to access government assistance and amenities, while actively monitoring the local rollout of government policies, particularly the 13MP.

Finally, the programme bridges the gap between government agencies and local neighbourhoods through social initiatives spanning all five themes. These include health programmes, community gardens, senior care workshops, neighbourhood safety initiatives, youth education, and briefing sessions by officers from district councils, municipal councils, City Hall (DBKL), and other relevant government agencies. Residents requiring welfare and health support are able to seamlessly access aid and services from participating government bodies.

THE MODULES OF CITIZENS' RIGHTS EDUCATION AND THE 13TH MALAYSIA PLAN (13MP)

INTRODUCTION

Modules on citizens' Rights Education and the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP), developed to bring grassroots people's understanding of RMK-13 priorities for the next 5 years and awareness of their rights in line with the UDHR. It aim to bring participatory approach into policy making and knowledge on rights, inline with SDG16.7.

In Collaboration with

KEMENTERIAN KEWANGAN MALAYSIA · YAYASAN HASANAH · MySDG Centre FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

WORKSHOP SLIDES:



TRAINER'S MODULE:



**Reading Materials are available in Malay language only.*

2



Neighbourhood Programme at Taman Inderapura, Kuantan, Pahang

FROM LOCAL NEIGHOURBOODS TO POLICY IMPACT: FOSTERING RESILIENCE, UNITY, AND SUSTAINABILITY

The Neighbourhood and Leadership Programme (PKK) is a grassroots programme organised for neighbourhood communities to empower and build resilient communities by effectively identifying and strategising the use of existing resources among neighbourhood members for the collective good. A leadership-based approach and the collective, systematic practice of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) principles are utilised to foster sustainable neighbourhood communities.

APPGM-SDG initiated Phase 1 of the programme by introducing 5 neighbourhood programme themes in 2024 across 50 neighbourhood areas in Peninsular Malaysia, as well as the territories of Sabah and Sarawak.



PKK Empowerment Workshop through Policy Intervention (Citizenship Rights Theme) at Nasi Kak Chik Hall, Tumpat, Kelantan

PKK were implemented based on five neighbourhood themes: Leadership, Family, Child and Youth Development, as well as two policy intervention-themed programmes—Citizens' Rights Education and the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP) Programme. PKK continued into 2025 with funding allocated for two programmes: strengthening neighbourhood committees and neighbourhood programmes with the local community. For 2026, Phase 2 resumed with 5 neighbourhood themes, prioritising the two policy intervention themes.

Overall, the implementation of the five PKK alongside neighbourhood communities successfully engaged a total of 35,000 participants across 2024 and 2026. A total of 750 neighborhood leaders actively participated and established neighbourhood committees in their respective areas to execute PKK with their local communities. All neighbourhood committees underwent the Neighbourhood Committee Leadership Enhancement Programme organised by APPGM-SDG in 2025 to execute neighbourhood programmes more effectively and efficiently.



PKK Empowerment Workshop through Policy Intervention (Citizenships' Rights & 13MP Theme) for PPR Impian Baiduri (Petaling Jaya) in Melaka

The Policy Intervention Programmes—Citizens' Rights Education and the 13MP, in collaboration with MySDG Centre for Social Inclusion—are two newly introduced programme themes for neighbourhood communities. These programmes are conducted in the form of workshops for 50 community and organisational leaders from a given neighbourhood. Following the one-day workshop with local leaders, a follow-up public lecture on Citizens' Rights Education and 13MP is held with the local community. Community leaders and members are briefed in detail on their legal rights as citizens, education rights, economic rights, housing rights, voting rights, and the right to freedom of expression through Citizens' Rights Education. Socio-economic issues and national policies highly relevant to national, community, neighbourhood, and individual development are explained through the 13MP Workshop.

This policy intervention programme also empowers neighbourhood communities to lead and care for their neighbourhoods through shared responsibility. Participants are encouraged to monitor the implementation of 13MP at the neighbourhood level and protect their families and neighbourhoods by leveraging the importance of the country's constitution and laws.

Impact and Best Practices of PKK

1. *Increased Community Participation*

PKK has successfully increased local community participation, particularly among youth and women of various ethnicities. Residents do not merely attend as passive participants; they are increasingly interested in actively engaging in the planning and execution of neighbourhood activities, including *gotong-royong* (communal cooperation), community safety, and social welfare activities that benefit the local area.

2. *Strengthened Community Cooperation*

The implementation of programmes based on the SDGs has strengthened cooperation between Neighbourhood Committees, community organisations, and various local stakeholders. Support from diverse groups, including community organisations and grassroots bodies regardless of background, has helped broaden the reach of neighbourhood programmes and enhance community development impact.

3. *Enhanced Inter-Racial Harmony*

Various neighbourhood activities such as family days, sports, cultural events, and *gotong-royong* have created spaces for interaction among residents of different ethnicities and backgrounds. Programmes hosted in these areas focus on the principles of *Rukun Negara*, which serve as the foundation for national unity and development—fostering patriotism, spiritual values, and strong racial integration within multi-ethnic neighbourhood communities. These activities not only strengthen bonds but also improve communication between the community and local leaders, contributing to the building of a more harmonious and resilient community.

4. *Closer Relations with Government Agencies*

PKK have deepened the relationship between local communities and government agencies or local authorities through shared participation in community activities. The presence of local councils, health departments, security agencies, and related departments opens avenues for information sharing, advisory services, and collaborative opportunities to advance community development. Grassroots-level policy intervention programmes (Citizens' Rights Education and 13MP) have encouraged community leaders and residents to engage with government agency initiatives, particularly regarding sustainable infrastructure and neighbourhood safety for the well-being of the community.

5. *Enhanced Community Leadership Skills*

Through participation in organised programmes and training, Neighbourhood Committee members and participants have shown marked improvements in leadership, planning, and programme execution skills. Neighborhood committees have begun monitoring government policies, such as the local rollout of the 13MP involving grassroots communities. Neighbourhood communities are actively collaborating with both government and private agencies to ensure the well-being and safety of their residential areas. Active participation from youth and women also reflects the readiness of the younger generation to take on leadership roles in advancing their communities sustainably through various socio-economic activities that secure a promising future.



Neighbourhood Programme at Gua Musang, Kelantan

As we reflect on this month's focus, it becomes clear that translating grassroots experiences into lasting policy impact begins within our local neighbourhoods. By empowering community leadership, strengthening inter-racial harmony, and bridging the gap between everyday local realities and national frameworks like the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP), we build the foundation for true resilience, unity, and sustainability. As we move forward into upcoming initiatives, let us continue to nurture our shared spaces and champion community-driven solutions that drive progress across every constituency in Malaysia.

By Karuppiah Palaniandy
(Neighbourhood Development Programme Coordinator, APPGM-SDG)

3

FROM PASSIVE BENEFICIARIES TO ACTIVE PARTNERS: HOW GRASSROOTS LEADERSHIP IS TRANSFORMING KAMPUNG TILIS





Kampung Tilis, located in the P.181 Tenom Parliamentary Constituency, Sabah, is a community with immense potential for growth through the active participation of its residents, the strengthening of neighbourhood networks, and effective grassroots leadership. In the context of rural development, a village's strength lies not only in its physical infrastructure, but also in the community's capacity to identify its needs, work collectively, voice shared interests, and actively participate in the development process.

Recognising this, the Kampung Tilis Leadership and Neighbourhood Programme (PKK) was implemented by the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA / PIBG) of SK Tilis, sponsored by APPGM-SDG and Yayasan Hasanah. The programme was executed in two phases: Phase 1 in 2024 and Phase 2 in 2026. This programme serves as a platform to strengthen community leadership, foster neighbourhood spirit, and build a more united, caring, resilient, and active society in local development.

As the Head of Neighbourhood for Kampung Tilis, my vision is to see Kampung Tilis evolve into a united, prosperous, resilient community with effective local leadership. This vision is translated through efforts to empower local committees, mobilise resident participation, advocate for community needs, and open access to development opportunities.

The implementation of this programme focuses on several key themes, including: grassroots leadership and committee empowerment, neighbourhood spirit and community unity, citizens' rights and responsibilities, access to services and development opportunities, connecting communities with the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP), education and human capital development, family economy, environmental care, as well as safety and disaster preparedness. These themes form a holistic approach, ensuring that village development is not solely infrastructure-oriented, but also emphasises human development and community capacity building.

To ensure effective leadership, several key strategies are emphasised. First, leading by example through integrity, transparency, fairness, and mutual respect for all residents. Second, listening before acting by grasping the real issues through meaningful discussions and community visits. Third, building a strong team by delegating tasks according to committee members' strengths while preparing future successors. Fourth, connecting the community with government agencies, elected representatives, NGOs, and strategic partners. Fifth, taking data-driven action by maintaining organised records of community needs, beneficiaries, assets, and action statuses.



This approach is further reinforced through a five-step action plan: Listen, Plan, Connect, Implement, and Monitor. Every community issue must be listened to and identified, planned based on priority, connected to relevant stakeholders, implemented collectively, and continuously monitored through proper documentation and follow-up actions.

My aspiration as the Leader of Neighbourhood is to cultivate a community that acts not merely as passive recipients of development, but as active development partners. Residents must be empowered with knowledge about their rights and responsibilities, feel confident to voice their needs through proper channels, collaborate effectively, and manage as well as monitor community initiatives independently.





Ultimately, "Tilis Atulai" is more than just a slogan. It represents an aspiration to foster trustworthy leadership, a united neighbourhood, empowered citizens, and inclusive development. The success of this programme relies on the continued collaboration between the PTA, neighbourhood leadership, residents, the school, government agencies, and strategic partners. With effective leadership and active community participation, Kampung Tilis can progress from being a community that receives development to a community that actively shapes its own prosperous and resilient future.

By Lanjuin Andawai
(Neighbourhood Leader of Kampung Tilis, Sabah)

SESI PERBINCANGAN MEJA BULAT PARLIMEN

PERBINCANGAN DASAR SDG APPGM-SDG 2026



HOW GRASSROOTS LEADERSHIP AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT ARE DRIVING CHANGE IN PAKAN, SARAWAK



Building Leadership from the Grassroots

In a rapidly changing world, community leadership is no longer based solely on positions or titles. Instead, the true value of a leader shines through their ability to reach out to the community, understand the realities of grassroots life, and elevate the community's voice to broader platforms.

This represents a community-centered approach to leadership rooted in togetherness and service, with a strong emphasis on direct connection with the community. Understanding an issue requires more than reading reports or numbers; it means listening firsthand to the experiences, hopes, and challenges faced by the people.

A ground-level approach is vital because grassroots communities have diverse needs depending on their local context. What may seem small from a general perspective can be of immense importance to a specific family or community.

This commitment is proven in practice through the Pekan Pakan Youth Club and the Pakan Football Club. For instance, serving as the organizing chairman for high-impact programs in the Pakan and Julau districts is concrete proof of my efforts to build leadership platforms from the ground up.

Elevating Unheard Voices

The voice of the community must be heard and brought to the forefront. Aspirations related to community development, education, economic opportunities, youth, basic infrastructure, and social well-being require continuous attention.

In this context, a leader's role is not just to convey views, but to ensure these voices have proper channels to reach relevant authorities.

Through ongoing community initiatives, I regularly go to the ground to listen directly to the concerns of longhouse residents and rural communities. Furthermore, I serve as a bridge to bring local basic infrastructure issues to the attention of higher authorities, ensuring no voice is left behind.



The Younger Generation as Successors

Another crucial dimension of community leadership is having the courage to create space for the younger generation.

Youth are not merely beneficiaries of development; they are assets who will determine the future direction of the community. They must be given opportunities to participate, speak up, learn to lead, and take on responsibilities within society.

It is about bridging the experience of previous generations with the energy, ideas, and aspirations of the new generation. Recognising this reality, I initiated the Julau Idol competition to discover artistic talent, build self-confidence, and provide a positive alternative space for rural youth to spend their leisure time productively.

Leadership Built on Trust

Ultimately, community leadership is about trust. Trust cannot be earned through words alone; it is born out of presence, active listening, consistency in fulfilling responsibilities, and the willingness to stand with the community when facing challenges.

This is what gives grassroots leadership its unique value. Leaders who stay close to their community gain an understanding of not only what is needed, but also why it matters to their daily lives.

The local community's trust in me has been nurtured through consistency in managing the activities of the Pekan Pakan Youth Club. I consistently prioritise transparency and sincerity in every welfare programme and community sports event conducted alongside local residents.



More Than Just a Title

Being a leader is not merely about standing in front, but about being ready to walk alongside the community. In an increasingly complex society, an approach centered on service, togetherness, culture, and community development holds an essential place.

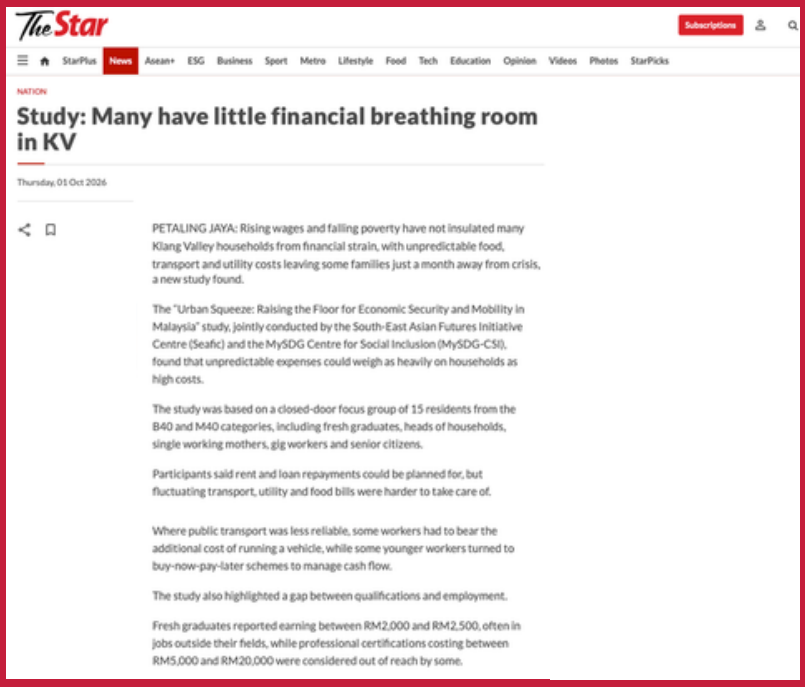
Because in the end, a community's history is written not only through the physical projects or infrastructure built, but through the people who are willing to give their time, energy, and commitment to ensure their community continues to move forward.

Choosing leadership means accepting a trust—to listen to grassroots voices, strengthen unity, and open doors for the next generation to go even further.



By Kevin Jampang anak Ranggak
(Neighbourhood Leader of Pekan Pakan Youth Club, Julau, Sarawak)

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE FEATURING MySDG Centre FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION



The Star

Subscriptions

StarPlus News Asean+ ESG Business Sport Metro Lifestyle Food Tech Education Opinion Videos Photos StarPicks

NATION

Study: Many have little financial breathing room in KV

Thursday, 01 Oct 2026

PETALING JAYA: Rising wages and falling poverty have not insulated many Klang Valley households from financial strain, with unpredictable food, transport and utility costs leaving some families just a month away from crisis, a new study found.

The "Urban Squeeze: Raising the Floor for Economic Security and Mobility in Malaysia" study, jointly conducted by the South-East Asian Futures Initiative Centre (Seafic) and the MySDG Centre for Social Inclusion (MySDG-CSI), found that unpredictable expenses could weigh as heavily on households as high costs.

The study was based on a closed-door focus group of 15 residents from the B40 and M40 categories, including fresh graduates, heads of households, single working mothers, gig workers and senior citizens.

Participants said rent and loan repayments could be planned for, but fluctuating transport, utility and food bills were harder to take care of.

Where public transport was less reliable, some workers had to bear the additional cost of running a vehicle, while some younger workers turned to buy-now-pay-later schemes to manage cash flow.

The study also highlighted a gap between qualifications and employment.

Fresh graduates reported earning between RM2,000 and RM2,500, often in jobs outside their fields, while professional certifications costing between RM5,000 and RM20,000 were considered out of reach by some.

Read the Full Article on The Star

5 EMPOWERING GUA MUSANG'S SECOND GENERATION: COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE IN KESEDAR

The Gua Musang KESEDAR Second Generation Organisation (G2K) serves as a vital platform to strengthen the involvement of second-generation settler (*peneroka*) families in local community development. The uniqueness of G2K's leadership is demonstrated through its grassroots approach, deep empathy for community needs, and commitment to building youth capacity so they are better equipped to face modern development challenges.

The primary strength of G2K's local leadership lies in its profound understanding of the local community's realities and aspirations. Leaders close to the ground possess the insight to accurately identify pressing issues, particularly regarding socioeconomic development, employment opportunities, education, skills training, entrepreneurship, and family well-being. This local context serves as the foundation for designing programmes that are practical, relevant, and value-adding to the community.

G2K's leadership also features a participatory leadership approach. Community members are not viewed merely as beneficiaries; instead, they are given space to become strategic partners in planning and executing initiatives. This fosters a shared sense of ownership while boosting local accountability and commitment. The close bond between leaders and residents serves as a crucial cornerstone for building trust and strengthening local unity.



In empowering the younger generation, G2K plays a strategic role as a leadership development platform for emerging youth. Young people must be provided with opportunities to organise activities, lead teams, solve problems, and engage with diverse stakeholders. Such hands-on experience not only builds leadership skills but also instills self-confidence, discipline, creativity, and a spirit of volunteerism. Developing a competent and value-driven second generation is an essential investment in the long-term continuity of community development.

From an economic perspective, G2K's leadership acts as a catalyst for empowerment through community-based economic initiatives. Programmes in modern agriculture, entrepreneurship, vocational training, and local business development have the potential to unlock new income streams for residents. This aligns with the vision of building a community that does not rely solely on aid, but possesses the capacity to be self-reliant, create opportunities, and manage resources productively.

Another key feature of G2K's leadership is its ability to construct strategic networks and partnerships. In an increasingly complex development environment, collaboration with government agencies, the private sector, educational institutions, civil society organisations, and local stakeholders is essential. A strong network enables the sharing of expertise, resources, training opportunities, and programme expansion. Simultaneously, G2K functions as a vital bridge connecting community aspirations with organisations capable of supporting local development.



Effective leadership must also be anchored in integrity, accountability, transparency, and clear communication. These values are paramount in ensuring that every trust placed in the organisation is fulfilled responsibly. Leadership is not simply about holding a title, but about the ability to move the community forward together, build confidence, and generate long-lasting impact.



In conclusion, the uniqueness of the Gua Musang KESEDAR Second Generation Organisation's local leadership lies in its ability to combine grassroots governance, community participation, youth development, economic empowerment, and strategic networking. This community-oriented approach provides a solid foundation for continuous empowerment. With inclusive, high-integrity, and visionary leadership, G2K is poised to remain an essential platform for advancing second-generation capacity and building a more resilient, productive, and progressive Gua Musang community.

By Mat Zaid Muhamad
(Neighbourhood Leader of KESEDAR Second Generation Organisation (G2K), Gua Musang, Kelantan)



6 FROM WASTE TO WEALTH: HOW WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN TAMAN DATO' HARUN IS DRIVING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE



Great change does not necessarily begin in grand places. Sometimes, it starts in a small community—with a group of women, an idea, and the courage to see opportunities behind challenges. This is the story of Persatuan Warisan Kraf Wanita (PWKW), where grassroots leadership transforms challenges into opportunities, and opportunities into lasting change.

At the PKNS Flats in Taman Dato' Harun, Petaling Jaya, Selangor, a women-led movement was born—one built on the belief that the community is not merely a passive recipient of change, but an active creator, solution provider, and agent of change.

For PWKW, local leadership means more than managing an organisation. It is about listening to community voices, understanding daily realities, identifying potential, and mobilising existing strengths to create practical solutions.

Established on the 20th of October 2023, PWKW grew out of active participation by local women and a partnership with Impactlution through the Waste to Wealth initiative, which began in October 2022. From a single small idea emerged an approach combining women's empowerment, social entrepreneurship, and environmental sustainability.



Through Waste to Wealth, glass waste previously deemed worthless is given a second life—transformed into value-added products such as decorative vases, landscape pots, and multipurpose containers. The community also produces eco-friendly items like reusable sanitary pads.

Yet, the true value of PWKW lies not just in the products created, but in the women transformed behind the scenes.

B40 women, homemakers, single mothers, and senior citizens are given opportunities to build skills in glass upcycling, glass craft, product development, business management, financial literacy, cost calculations, and digital marketing. From skills spring opportunities; from opportunities spring income; and from income springs confidence and independence. This is the essence of PWKW's leadership: "*From the community, with the community, and for the community.*"



Local leadership has also empowered community members to exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens to speak up, participate, and contribute to development. When communities are given room to share experiences, identify issues, and co-create solutions, they transition from passive beneficiaries to active development partners.

As an APPGM-SDG Solution Provider, PWKW brings grassroots community experiences, voices, and aspirations to broader platforms. Real ground-level insights are translated into inputs that inform policy discussions and sustainable development efforts.

This approach aligns closely with the aspirations of the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP) 2026–2030, particularly in fostering inclusive and sustainable development, societal well-being, social mobility, environmental sustainability, and elevating the role of NGOs, community movements, and social enterprises in socioeconomic growth.

In this context, PWKW serves as a vital bridge between grassroots realities and national development goals.

However, change cannot be built in isolation. PWKW's strength is reinforced through strategic collaborations with Impactlution, Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPJ), local leaders, councilors, government agencies, corporate partners, educational institutions, and community organisations. These partnerships enable expertise, opportunities, and resources to be mobilised effectively to address real community needs.

Through the 3R approach (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle), the community not only minimises waste but also generates economic value and raises awareness for sustainability.

What began with a small group of women and a single idea carries a far greater message: "*Change does not need to start with massive resources. It starts when a community believes it has the power to create change itself.*"



When a woman gains a skill, a family gains an opportunity. When a community gains a voice, development becomes closely aligned with reality.

Thus, the community is not merely a recipient of change.

The community is a creator.
The community is a solution partner.
The community is an agent of change.

From waste to value, skills to income, voice to participation, and community to sustainable development—PWKW proves that leadership rooted at the grassroots level can turn challenges into opportunities and opportunities into real impact.

It may have started with a glass bottle, a piece of cloth, a pair of hands, and a single idea. Yet, when mobilised together, it builds confidence, sustainable income, networks, environmental stewardship, and a brighter future for the community.

"Transforming Waste into Value, Empowering Women, Building Sustainable Communities."

Because true change is not just about building a community; it is about empowering the community to build change.



By Mimi Zairol Mohamad Nor
(Neighbourhood Leader of Persatuan Warisan Kraf Wanita, PWKW))

7

EMPOWERING LANGKAWI'S COMMUNITIES: LOCAL LEADERSHIP, WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT, AND SUSTAINABLE ACTION



Local leadership is an essential element in developing prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable communities. Effective leaders do not merely serve as program drivers; they act as vital bridges connecting residents, government agencies, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In this context, as the APPGM-SDG Local Coordinator (LC) for Langkawi and Chairperson of the Langkawi Women's Association (LAWA), I play an active role in empowering the local community through a leadership approach rooted in collaboration, empathy, and collective action.

The uniqueness of this leadership lies in an active commitment to understanding the needs of the community in Pulau Langkawi. As the LC, I am responsible for coordinating the implementation of programmes based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), paying close attention to the specific issues and challenges faced by the local population. This approach extends beyond executing activities to actively identifying core challenges, gathering resident feedback, and connecting the community with relevant stakeholders.


Photo with Northern Zone Local Coordinators

For me, effective community development must begin by listening to the voices of the people. Every group—including women, families, senior citizens, children, youth, and vulnerable populations—has distinct needs and challenges. Therefore, a leader should prioritise a ground-level approach to understand the daily realities of local residents. Maintaining close ties with the community ensures that programme planning is targeted, aligned with genuine needs, and capable of yielding lasting benefits.


Photo with the LAWA Association

As Chairperson of the Langkawi Women's Association (LAWA), I focus on grassroots women's development and empowerment. I view women not as passive beneficiaries of development, but as strategic partners equipped to lead, contribute ideas, and bring meaningful change to society. Through various community initiatives, LAWA serves as a platform to encourage women's participation, build self-confidence, and expand skill and leadership development opportunities.

A key hallmark of this leadership style is the ability to connect diverse stakeholders to advance community development agendas. Collaboration between LAWA, neighbourhood committees, government agencies, local leaders, and strategic partners forms the foundation for comprehensive programme execution. Through this collaborative network, resources, expertise, and experience are mobilised to address societal issues collectively—reinforcing volunteerism and shared responsibility across Langkawi.

In carrying out these leadership duties, I place strong emphasis on unity and neighborhood spirit. A resilient community is built when people know one

another, respect differences, and work together. Community programmes serve not only to deliver aid or run activities, but also as mediums for building social bonds, fostering mutual understanding, and strengthening harmony among residents of diverse backgrounds.

Experience in coordinating community development programs highlights the importance of flexible, resilient, and solution-oriented leadership. Every programme presents unique coordination, participant engagement, or stakeholder alignment challenges. Hence, I adopt an approach centred on communication, joint planning, and collaborative problem-solving. Programme success is measured not only by participation numbers, but by the tangible benefits felt by the community and the sustainability of efforts after the program concludes.

This leadership approach also balances the dual roles of a development coordinator and a women's organisation leader. These roles complement one another by expanding collaborative networks, strengthening community involvement, and ensuring local voices are heard—making development a shared responsibility rather than a solo endeavor.



Recognition for these leadership contributions was marked when I was selected as a recipient of the KSI Professional & Leadership Development Award (KSI PDA) on the 15th of September 2026, at The Majestic Hotel, Kuala Lumpur.



This achievement serves as a meaningful honor reflecting commitment and dedication to local leadership. The award acts as a catalyst to further strengthen community development, empower women, and drive the aspirations of the Langkawi community toward an inclusive and sustainable future.

In conclusion, this leadership reflects a local leader who stays close to the community, prioritises collaboration, and remains dedicated to local progress. Being named a recipient of the KSI PDA 2026 marks a significant milestone in my leadership journey. Through my roles as APPGM-SDG Local Coordinator for Langkawi and Chairperson of LAWA, I remain committed to empowering women, strengthening neighbourhood bonds, and building an inclusive and sustainable society. Meaningful change begins with empathy, action, and commitment at the grassroots level.

By Azlina Mansor
(Neighbourhood Leader of Langkawi Women's Association (LAWA), Kedah)

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!



LEADING TOGETHER WITH THE COMMUNITY: HOW TAMAN ANGKASA NURI BUILDS A RESILIENT, INCLUSIVE, AND ACTIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD



Leadership at the neighbourhood level possesses a unique quality because it stems directly from the needs, experiences, and aspirations of the local community. A neighbourhood leader does not merely hold a title; they serve as a bridge connecting residents with government agencies, a point of reference for the community, and a catalyst for activities that bring meaningful benefits. The true strength of local leadership lies in its ability to engage directly with residents, understand their challenges, and continuously seek solutions together.

In the context of Taman Angkasa Nuri, neighbourhood leadership is built upon a foundation of togetherness, *gotong-royong* (communal cooperation), and shared responsibility. Effective leadership does not rely solely on top-down directives from a single individual; instead, it prioritises the active involvement of residents, committee members, youth, women, children, and all walks of life. Every perspective is welcomed, and every individual is encouraged to contribute according to their capabilities.

Among the defining characteristics of local leadership is the "on the ground presence" *(turun padang*) approach. Neighbourhood leaders must be present among the community—not only during official programmes, but as part of daily life. Pressing issues concerning cleanliness, safety, health, public amenities, and resident welfare demand close, continuous attention. Through this approach, the bond between leaders and residents is strengthened, and trust develops naturally.

Local leadership also plays a vital role in transforming a residential area into an active and productive community. In Taman Angkasa Nuri, activities such as *gotong-royong*, community health programmes, youth activities, family events, and the development of the Community Garden serve as key platforms to foster closer ties among residents. The Community Garden functions not only as an urban farming space, but also as a hub for learning, social interaction, and economic micro-initiatives through hydroponics, vegetable cultivation, and freshwater fish farming projects.

Furthermore, the uniqueness of local leadership is evident in its capacity to forge strategic partnerships with various stakeholders. Maintaining strong ties with local authorities, government agencies, educational institutions, civil society organisations, and the private sector helps the community secure support, expertise, and development opportunities. This collaborative network demonstrates that a neighbourhood's success is not the achievement of a single leader, but the combined energy and commitment of diverse parties.



Beyond physical development, neighbourhood leadership must prioritise cultivating positive social values. Community activities, religious programmes, education, health, safety, and youth development nurture a society that is caring, responsible, and respectful. In a community composed of individuals with varied backgrounds and needs, local leaders must act as a unifying force, fostering mutual understanding and a shared sense of belonging.

At the same time, neighbourhood leaders must remain adaptable to change. Leveraging technology and social media provides a fast, efficient communication channel between the committee and residents. Updates regarding programmes, cleanliness drives, security alerts, welfare support, and community opportunities can be delivered seamlessly. This approach renders neighbourhood leadership more transparent, responsive, and connected to the younger generation.



In conclusion, the uniqueness of local leadership lies in the close relationship between leaders and the community. A neighborhood leader is not merely a programme administrator, but a mobiliser, a listener, a connector, and a unifier. Leadership rooted in togetherness creates a neighbourhood that is not only clean, healthy, and safe, but also possesses a strong sense of unity and the capacity to thrive sustainably. This is the true power of local leadership —leading with the community, moving with the community, and building a shared future together.

By Noor Erwan Idris
(Neighbourhood Leader of Persatuan Komuniti Taman Angkasa Nuri, Melaka)

THEMES FOR UPCOMING NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER



Poverty

In Collaboration with

APPGM-SDG · KEMENTERIAN KEWANGAN MALAYSIA · YAYASAN HASANAH

NOVEMBER



Mainstreaming 3rd Sector

In Collaboration with

Akademi MySDG Academy

DECEMBER



Human Rights

Submit your story now:

09 12 - 13 SEPTEMBER 2026



RISE 2026 NORTHERN ZONE: STRENGTHENING SOLUTION PROVIDERS FOR GREATER COMMUNITY IMPACT

Rising Impact through Sustainable Empowerment (RISE) 2026 Northern Zone was held on 12–13 September 2026 at Casuarina Meru, Ipoh, as the Northern Zone's Solution Provider Capacity Building Conference. The programme brought together 66 Solution Providers (SPs), 13 community beneficiaries, 8 strategic partners and supporting organisations, and representatives from 5 government agencies. The two-day programme provided a platform for SPs to exchange experiences, strengthen their capabilities, build networks and explore opportunities to enhance the sustainability and impact of their community initiatives.

The programme opened with an introduction by Dr. Thanaraj Murudi, Northern Zone Head, APPGM-SDG, followed by the opening address by YB Dr. V. Sivakumar, Member of Parliament for Batu Gajah. The first panel, "Solution Providers' Impact Stories", brought forward practical experiences from Perak Caring Association through Mom's Cottage, Masjid Al Taufiqiah Khairiah, PKK Kampung Pokok Assam, and BONUSMART. Rather than focusing only on project activities, the sharing highlighted how community initiatives respond to local needs and create tangible benefits for their beneficiaries.



This was complemented by an Impact Evaluation session led by Dr. Nur Amirah Borhan of Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI). The session introduced the importance of looking beyond outputs and activities towards the outcomes and changes generated by community projects. For SPs, this provided useful perspectives on how project impact can be better understood, documented and communicated.

The "Market Readiness & Sales Techniques" panel further broadened the learning by addressing an important aspect of project sustainability, the ability to connect products and services with appropriate markets. Contributions from Taman Sara, KOP-SDG Bhd. and KRT Chemor Idaman provided practical perspectives on understanding market needs, improving sales approaches and strengthening the commercial potential of community-based initiatives.



The sharing session, "From Community for Community: Empowering Communities, Building Change Together", by Puan Jamilah Zakaria, Director of the Perak Women and Community Development Secretariat (Wanita Perak), highlighted another important dimension of community development: meaningful participation and collective action. It reinforced the role of communities not merely as beneficiaries, but as active contributors to creating and sustaining local solutions.

One of the key interactive components of Day 1 was the 16-station Roving Workshop. Participants moved between stations featuring community projects, Solution Providers, government agencies and supporting organisations. This format encouraged direct exchange of knowledge and experiences, allowing SPs to learn from different approaches, products, services and community solutions beyond their own projects.

Day 2 expanded the discussion from individual projects to the wider social and economic ecosystem. Following the opening and officiating ceremony by YB Kapten Azahari bin Hasan, Member of Parliament for Padang Rengas, the plenary session on "RMK-13 – Social Economic Empowerment & the Third Sector" brought together representatives from APPGM-SDG, SME Corp Malaysia, Institut Koperasi Malaysia (IKMA), QUEST International University (QIU) and Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER). The session provided SPs with broader perspectives on the social economy, the third sector and the importance of strengthening institutional and ecosystem support for community initiatives. The session also included practical questions on market access, product aggregation, business support and funding.

On bringing SP products together for wider marketing, Dr. Nachiamei Ramasamy, General Manager, Talent & Sustainable Development, NCER, shared NCER's experience in developing agricultural collection centres and facilitating access to wider and international markets, highlighting the value of collaboration in addressing production volume, branding and quality challenges. Participants also sought clarification on the RM200,000 grant for newly rated Inclusive Business (IB) companies. Cik Azrine Othman, State Director, SME Corp. Malaysia (Perak), explained that the grant can support areas including machinery and equipment, infrastructure, digitalisation, working capital, marketing and research and development. Tuan Mohd Zahid Md Yunus, Director General, Human Capital Development, IKMA, also highlighted KUSKOP's Mymall platform and the "Power Up 10K" initiative for micro, small and medium enterprises.





The subsequent panel on "Methods for Scaling Social Economy" explored how community-based initiatives and social enterprises can move beyond small-scale implementation. The discussion involving Athanliz Innovations, Bank Rakyat and STeP touched on areas such as innovation, financing, market access and institutional support, giving SPs practical considerations for developing initiatives that can grow while maintaining their social purpose.

RISE 2026 also strengthened the documentation and knowledge base of the Solution Provider network through the Solution Provider Data Collection session facilitated by KOP-SDG Bhd. Financial reports from the 2025 Solution Providers were collected to track project income and expenditure, helping APPGM-SDG understand their financial performance, outcomes, impact and sustainability.

Overall, RISE 2026 Northern Zone served as more than a capacity-building conference, providing SPs with opportunities to learn from one another, reflect on their impact, strengthen market readiness, explore pathways for scaling social economy initiatives, and connect with strategic partners and supporting institutions. Through these exchanges, RISE contributed to building a stronger network of Solution Providers equipped to develop more impactful, sustainable and community-responsive solutions.



By Rose Helen Ambrose,
Ruang Komuniti MySDG Zon Utara, Ipoh

10 15 SEPTEMBER 2026



GRASSROOTS LEADERS HONOURED AT THE 5TH MALAYSIA SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

The people who carry the Sustainable Development Goals into Malaysia's grassroots took centre stage at the 5th Malaysia Sustainability Leadership Summit. 12 Local Coordinators and Neighbourhood Leaders from APPGM-SDG were among the recipients of the Malaysia SDG Community Impact Icon Awards, presented by KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific.

The Summit was jointly organised by KSI, APPGM-SDG and the Economic Club of Kuala Lumpur (ECKL) at The Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur. About 130 policymakers, parliamentarians, government officials, business and sustainability leaders, civil society representatives and community leaders attended under the theme "Driving Sustainable Development Through Transformative Partnerships and Collaboration."



Recognising leadership where it matters most

The Community Impact Icon Awards, presented alongside the Special SDG Excellence Awards, recognised individuals and organisations whose work shows real commitment and measurable impact in advancing the SDGs. For APPGM-SDG, the recognition of its Local Coordinators and Neighbourhood Leaders was an especially meaningful moment.

These leaders form the backbone of the Policy Solutions Initiative. Working at the district and neighbourhood level, they strengthen local leadership and governance, mobilise residents and connect community realities with policy processes. Their work has included community engagement for the 13th Malaysia Plan (RMK13) and on citizenship rights (Hak Warganegara), two areas where the voices of ordinary Malaysians, particularly those at risk of being left behind, need to be heard.



Much of this work happens away from the spotlight. It involves organising community meetings, listening to residents, documenting local issues, following up with agencies and building trust over months and years. The awards acknowledge the personal sacrifice behind this commitment, as many of these leaders give their time and energy with little formal recognition.

Learning from the ground up

The network of 55 Local Coordinators and 46 Neighbourhood Leaders has also shaped how APPGM-SDG approaches policy work. Paniirselvam Jayaraman, Director of the Policy Solutions Department at APPGM-SDG, has worked closely with them for more than two years.

"I have been privileged to work alongside them fully for over two years and to learn best practices from each of them," he said. "In fact, the policy solutions framework with effective community engagement that we developed came from learning from all of them: 55 Local Coordinators and 46 Neighbourhood Leaders."

This reflects a core belief within APPGM-SDG: effective policy does not flow only from the top down. Local leaders know their communities' needs, constraints and strengths best, and their insights turn national commitments into practical, locally grounded solutions.

A Summit built on partnership

The awards took place within a wider conversation on partnership. The Summit opened with a keynote by YB Dato' Sri Hajah Nancy Shukri, Minister of Women, Family and Community Development. Welcoming remarks came from Tan Sri Michael Yeoh, President of KSI and Vice Chair of the UN ESCAP Sustainable Business Network, and Prof. Datuk Dr Denison Jayasooria, Head of the APPGM-SDG Secretariat and President of the Society for the Promotion of SDG, Malaysia. Mr Nikolas Myint, UN Resident Coordinator for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam, delivered a special address.

Datuk Seri Mohd Iqbal Rawther, Chairman of ECKL, gave the introductory speech. Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, Advisor to the Society for the Promotion of SDGs and former Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy), delivered the luncheon keynote.

A central theme was the Public-Private-People Partnership (4P) approach. The first plenary, moderated by Anita Ahmad, CEO of MySDG Foundation, featured Dr Khairil Ahmad of APPGM-SDG's MySDG Centre for Social Inclusion, alongside speakers from Khazanah Nasional, UNDP and ENHEROES Group.





The closing session, "Social Economy and the Third Sector: Empowering Communities for Inclusive Growth and Wellbeing," was moderated by James Ryan Raj, Deputy Executive Director of APPGM-SDG. It highlighted community-led solutions through speakers including Zoel Ng of MySDG Academy, Azlini and Sridayu, grassroots leaders from cooperatives and women's associations. They showed how community enterprise, local development and income generation drive inclusive growth, which is the same ground where the award recipients work every day.

Congratulations and gratitude

APPGM-SDG extends its heartfelt congratulations to all award recipients, and in particular to the Local Coordinators and Neighbourhood Leaders whose dedication was recognised on the national stage. We also thank Yayasan Hasanah for its partnership and support in making this community leadership work possible.

Their recognition reminds us that the SDGs are achieved in neighbourhoods, one community and one committed leader at a time.

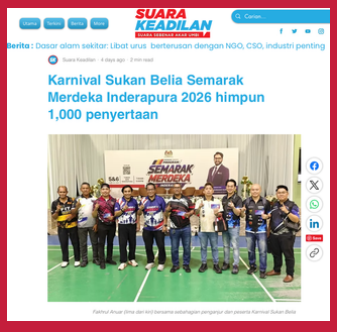


By Paniirselvam Jayaraman
(Policy Solutions Department)



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. 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.

SOLUTION PROVIDERS IN THE NEWS









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

https://www.facebook.com/APPGMSDGMY

https://appgm-sdg.com/