

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**



**Teach For Malaysia and Yayasan Hartalega Launch The Learning Box Project**

**KUALA LUMPUR, 19 October 2020** - Teach For Malaysia, in collaboration with Hartalega, aims to distribute 3000 self-directed learning boxes to 500 students whose learning was most impacted during the 18 week school closures. As of today, the first batch of 195 boxes has reached students in Lawas, Sarawak and Semporna, Sabah.

During the Movement Control Order, the Ministry of Education reported that 37% of students did not have access to a device. Furthermore, in a thinly populated rural area, a stable internet connection like 4G or even 3G is unlikely. Therefore, even though online classes took place during the Covid-19 school closures, many students were unable to benefit from these classes. For the youngest children in our schools, the cumulative effects of inequities are particularly concerning. The interruption to their learning is happening precisely at a time when crucial developmental gains matter most, since these gains provide an important foundation for child well-being, competence, skills and maturation.

Chan Soon Seng, Teach For Malaysia's CEO said, "While it is not yet fully understood what the real impact of the school closures on education will be, TFM believes that it is important to invest in educational recovery to ensure that we minimise the long term effects of the pandemic."

In order to reach students in less connected areas, with the support of Yayasan Hartalega, Teach For Malaysia worked closely with Atom and the Dot and Project ID to create self-directed learning boxes containing engaging activities and materials that can help students within the age group of 8-11 years old to continue learning even in limited or zero bandwidth environments. The activities come with bilingual instructions to ensure that every student is able to effectively engage with the content of the box. Teach For Malaysia is also working closely with local teachers and members of the communities to facilitate and guide the students in their learning.

Since 2018, Yayasan Hartalega has supported 3 Teach For Malaysia Fellows throughout the two year Fellowship, impacting 450 students across Selangor, Johor and Sabah. As schools closed due to the pandemic, Hartalega reached out to Teach For Malaysia to further support the students who were unable to access online classes due to the lack of connectivity.

Yayasan Hartalega shared, "Understanding that young Malaysians are the future of our nation and that education is the cornerstone to improving the welfare of any community, we have invested in the Learning Box Project to step up to the changing needs of students in response to the pandemic."

"As the Learning Box Project can be completed by students without having to rely on internet connectivity, we are able to reach a wide range of students from rural communities to ensure that education continues to remain accessible to each student regardless of their circumstances."

To ensure effectiveness and continued improvement of the Learning Box Project, Teach For Malaysia has partnered with teachers in the local community to continuously improve the contents of the boxes.

Leoforster Ruben Anak Upom, a teacher at SK Ba Kelalan in Lawas said, "Students can create, learn and have fun throughout the activity with the materials provided. The Learning Box incorporates elements of science experiments and also emphasises on the learning of English." As for the practicality of this project, Mohammad Nazmi Bin Rosli, a teacher at SK Long Sukang in Lawas shared that the Learning Box was appropriate to the needs of rural students as the activities are simple yet easy to understand and carry out.

The students also enjoyed learning practical measures to stay safe in light of the pandemic via fun activities in the Learning Box. The students shared that they were now more vigilant of their hygiene via proper hand-washing techniques and social distancing practices respectively. The Lava Lamp making activity was most enjoyed as it provided an avenue to express their creativity while learning the scientific concepts behind each activity effectively. Excited from her discovery of a keen interest in Science, a student from SK Long Luping said, "I dream to be a scientist when I am older." The students were also encouraged to share their ideas of possible contents for future boxes.

Moving forward, Teach For Malaysia, in partnership with Yayasan Hartalega, plans to reach more students in Semporna, Sabah, Lawas, Sarawak and Gopeng, Perak. The positive impact that is being generated from the Learning Box Project reaffirms that the mission to overcome education inequities in Malaysia requires collective effort to build success, especially in times of uncertainty.

## **About Teach For Malaysia**

Teach For Malaysia is an independent, not-for-profit organisation on a mission to provide all children in Malaysia the opportunity to attain an excellent education. We believe that a child's education and future should not be determined by their circumstances in life – so we recruit our country's rising generation of leaders to be part of the solution to the challenges faced by our communities today.

We partner with the Ministry of Education to recruit outstanding graduates and young professionals to become full-time teachers in high-need schools through our highly selective two-year Fellowship programme. We are proud to be one of over 50 partners in the global education network, Teach For All.

## **What we do**

- Build a movement of leaders to have immediate and long-term impact on high-need communities across Malaysia, during and after the 2-year leadership development programme.
- TFM collaborates with partners from all sectors to co-create an ecosystem that works towards education transformation. It is only through our collective efforts that education inequity will end.

## **Our impact (as of 2019):**

452 Fellows and Alumni, in more than 174 schools, across 10 states, impacting over 130,000 students across Malaysia. For more information, please visit

[www.teachformalaysia.org](http://www.teachformalaysia.org).

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