



PETRONAS BRINGS A MEASURE OF HOPE TO THE LOW-INCOME COMMUNITY

When the Government put out the call for corporate partners to step forward and help with its efforts to raise the living standards of low-income households, national oil corporation PETRONAS was among the first to unveil a comprehensive programme together with its NGO partner, MyKasih Foundation.



The programme has benefited 13,500 poverty-stricken families throughout the country, providing assistance in the form of essential food aids such as rice, flour and cooking oil for two years. Families are also encouraged to participate in activities promoting self-development aimed at enhancing their skills to break free from the poverty cycle.

Since the start of the Sentuhan Harapan Programme in 2010, over 5,000 families have participated in workshops such as the SMARTBelanja@LPPKN, which teaches participating families basic financial skills, and Program Nur Kasih, which provides health awareness training. The three-year programme was launched in Johor, Melaka and Sabah in 2011, Kedah in 2012, and in Pahang and Terengganu in 2013.

At the same time, Mostwell Sdn Bhd has been commissioned to provide sewing skills training to programme participants, which will enable them to find productive employment upon completion. Finally, PETRONAS has also appointed a People Systems Consultancy to conduct entrepreneurship training for 500 unemployed Sentuhan Harapan participants who will undergo a three-day intensive training programme.

The hope, at the completion of these programmes, is that the participants will have acquired the necessary skills to better their own circumstances in life, and more importantly, a hope for the future for themselves and their family.

SEJAHTERA

Building Sustainable Communities

YAYASAN SEJAHTERA DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES FOR LOW-INCOME GROUPS

Yayasan Sejahtera, a non-profit group mandated to help improve the lives of the poor in Malaysia, has been supporting the development of three villages in Pitas, Sabah in collaboration with the Government. As of 2013, Yayasan Sejahtera's team has implemented several projects, including a subsistence farming programme, a water access programme and a youth empowerment programme in the villages of Kg. Sungai Eloi, Kg. Tampakahu and Kg. Kinango.

The subsistence farming programme presently involves some 71 participants, whom are actively planting crops for the villages' own consumption. Meanwhile, 113 houses in the three villages have been hooked up to the alternative water system, which ensures regular and reliable access to clean water. Finally, the team has trained youth in the villages to monitor and document the progress of the projects.



In fitting out the homes for water access, the team, together with the Partners of Community Organisations (PACOS) Trust, identified suitable solutions and decided that the best way to help the residents of Kg. Tampakahu and Kg. Sungai Eloi was to provide homes with individual water tanks due to land issues. Kg. Kinango could, however, be outfitted with a water gravity system.

The project by Yayasan Sejahtera is part of the Government's overall plan to assist low-income groups in remote areas, particularly indigenous groups who have yet to receive any assistance. The programmes put in place in Pitas so far are expected to create a basic foundation meeting essential needs of the villages prior to further training programmes designed to improve entrepreneurship within the communities.