



UNITED NATIONS
MALAYSIA
.....

UN COUNTRY RESULTS REPORT MALAYSIA 2020

SUPPORTING MALAYSIA IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC



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Acronyms

APPG	All Party Parliamentary Group on the SDGs
COVAX	COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access
COVID-19	Novel Corona Virus 2019 (infection)
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DELIMa	Digital Educational Learning Initiative Malaysia
DFA	Development Finance Assessment
DOSM	Department of Statistics Malaysia
E-ELCT	Energy Efficiency Low Carbon Transport (project)
EPU	Economic Planning Unit
FOTE	Families on the Edge (Survey)
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSSC	Global Shared Services Centre
GSSU	Global Shared Services Unit
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IR4	Fourth Industrial Revolution
KLIA	Kuala Lumpur International Airport
MITI	Ministry of International Trade and Industry
MCO	Movement Control Order
MPMA	Malaysian Plastic Manufacturers Association
MOE	Ministry of Education
NADMA	National Disaster Management Agency
NIP	National Immunization Plan
RAHIS	Rapid Household Impact Survey
RC	Resident Coordinator
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SERP	(UN) Socio-economic Response Plan for COVID-19
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SUHAKAM	National Human Rights Commission
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	UN Capital Development Fund
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	UN Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNIDO	UN Industrial Development Organization
UN-Habitat	UN Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNGP_s	UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
UNODC	UN Office for Drugs and Crime
UN RCO	UN Resident Coordinator's Office
UNSDCF	UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
VNR	Voluntary National Review on SDG Progress
WAO	Women's Aid Organization
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Foreword



Stefan Priesner

*United Nations Resident Coordinator
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This is the UN's first ever unified results report for Malaysia. It brings together the collective efforts of the UN in Malaysia - at agency and corporate levels - to advance progress towards the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Crucially, it focuses on the UN family's signature contributions to the COVID-19 public health measures, the socio-economic response and national recovery plans.

This report also heralds the rollout in Malaysia of the UN reforms adopted by the General Assembly in 2018. This signals a new drive to deliver as one UN under a unified plan – the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). And a key achievement in 2020 was the development of the first UNSDCF for Malaysia, which is currently being finalized in consultation with Government counterparts.

Throughout the world, the UN's mission and its modus operandi, is to support and work with national governments. Building on the engagement launched at the 2019 Malaysia SDG Summit, the UN has crafted its programming to promote the achievement of national objectives. In doing so, we also pay tribute to the Government in aligning the current and forthcoming Twelfth Malaysia Plan, with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has dominated UN operations during 2020, requiring rapid repositioning and reshaping of programmes alongside the adoption of new working and delivery modalities. As this report makes clear, the UN has come forward and delivered on its mandate – helping the authorities to stem infections and loss of life, enabling vulnerable households to manage the pressures, and offering best practice policy and technical advice to deliver a rapid social and economic rebound.

In signing-off on the UN's operations in Malaysia during 2020, the year of the first global pandemic in modern times, and one of sadness and social dislocation, I look forward to a lasting, inclusive and sustainable recovery in 2021.

UN Country Team



UNITED
NATIONS
MALAYSIA



Resident Agencies



Non-Resident Agencies



Global and Regional Centres



Meet the UN Team in Malaysia



STEFAN PRIESNER

UNITED NATIONS
RESIDENT COORDINATOR



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RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE



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UNFPA
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J. KENDRA RINAS

IOM
CHIEF OF MISSION



PASCALE ALLOTEY

UNU
DIRECTOR OF UNU-HIGH



PANNUDA BOONPALA

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DEPUTY REGIONAL DIRECTOR



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DIRECTOR



SHAHBAZ KHAN

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REGIONAL DIRECTOR



MOHAMMAD NACIRI

UN WOMEN
REGIONAL DIRECTOR



JEREMY DOUGLAS

UNODC
REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE



LORETTA HIEBER GIRARDET

UNDRR
CHIEF, REGIONAL OFFICE



EAMONN MURPHY

UNAIDS
DIRECTOR



SYLVIE BETEMPS

ITC
SENIOR TRADE
PROMOTION OFFICER

Global and Regional Centres



DR SUSSAN BASIRI

WHO
GLOBAL SERVICE CENTRE
DIRECTOR



CARLOS MELENDEZ

WFP
HEAD



NONI MAFA BUNE

UNDP
GLOBAL SHARED SERVICES UNIT
DIRECTOR



JOAN SAWE

UNU
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION



Chapter 1

MALAYSIA IN 2020 AND THE BATTLE AGAINST COVID-19

1.1 UNDERLYING CONTEXT

Pre-pandemic, Malaysia's development performance was generally strong - the economy was showing positive momentum, with the country approaching the threshold of high-income status, and efforts to address a suite of social concerns, initiated by successive governments, notably on poverty and insecurity, were rapidly making progress.



Nevertheless, Malaysia faced several underlying challenges, and these remain pressing, regardless of the COVID-19 pandemic.

They include a set of issues around inclusion and equity, the need to ensure the socio-economic participation of all groups and communities, and a growing number of environmental pressures often associated with a rapid pace of development. As a maritime, globally connected and industrialized nation, Malaysia is greatly influenced by the external environment: the ever-present threat posed by climate change to a biodiverse nation; the uneven impacts of the Industry 4.0 and global technology revolution; and continuing regional and geo-political instabilities.

There is also a deeper structural character to the pressures faced:

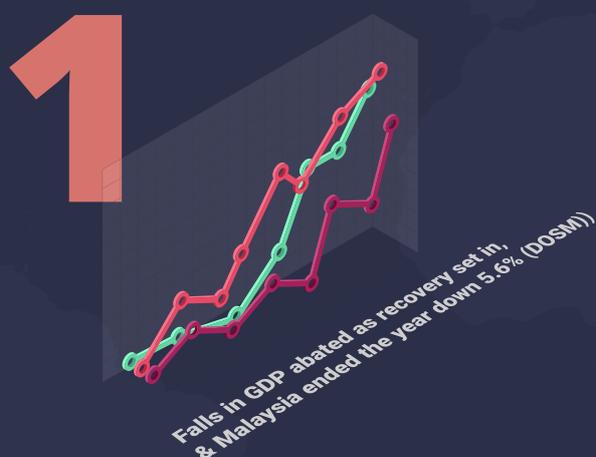


Many of these are also typical challenges faced by Upper Middle-Income Countries in rapid transition.

1.2 THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19

As elsewhere in the World, the COVID-19 pandemic affected Malaysia profoundly in 2020 and has come to dominate the policy agenda. Headline impacts range from the direct health implications, 345,500 infections and 1,272 deaths to date (31st March 2021), to the sizeable social and immediate economic fallout, which has followed.

The latter, driven by both the public health measures (adoption of MCO) in March 2020, and the ongoing global recession, saw GDP fall by 17% in quarter 2, and end down 5.6% for the full year, and unemployment rose initially from 3.3 to 5.3% (February to May), before settling at 4.8% (December 2020). While data is still limited, these effects via the channel of weaker household incomes, are likely to have driven rises in poverty and vulnerability.



Crucially, the Malaysian Government's bold actions to contain the SARS-Cov2 virus and manage the pressures, has limited the numbers of COVID-19 infections and deaths, and minimized the level of economic closure.

The Government has also adopted a sizeable fiscal response (totalling around 4% of GDP during 2020). Framed with the dual objective of supporting the economy and protecting the vulnerable, this included a large expansion in direct income support, and helped stabilize output and prevented social retrenchment. These policy choices, along with easing global economic conditions, enabled a modest recovery to get underway.

As the following chapter makes clear, UN agencies have supported these measures, monitored progress and offered feedback, and provided technical advice where needed.

By and large, Malaysia has succeeded in its battle against the pandemic, yet inevitably gaps have emerged. It proved difficult to cover all of those who were vulnerable to hardship, with informal sector workers heavily impacted. The livelihoods of migrants, who exist outside the formal welfare net, have faced exceptional pressures.

There were also non-economic impacts. These included direct service implications – closed schools and training institutions and reduced non COVID-19 health service provision, with clinics and hospitals stretched by spikes in infections and various hurdles to access. Moreover, lockdown and closure had negative socio-psychological effects, including isolation, loneliness and depression, and most troublingly, growing incidents of domestic violence.

The latter have disproportionately affected low-income families, youth and children, and women. Mention must also be made of the pressures the pandemic has placed on community relations, including media stereotyping and hate speech directed against stigmatized groups.

The recovery also remains fragile. Encouragingly, the Government has committed to additional health spending, including a comprehensive national COVID-19 vaccination programme, and expenditures to support a rapid rebound in economic activity. Yet it is vital that the policy responses also address the underlying challenges faced – to ensure greater inclusion through full employment decent work and higher productivity, and the need to combat and respond to climate change and other environmental threats.



Positively, the Ministry of Finance had taken steps to align the 2021 National Budget announced in November 2020 to the Sustainable Development Goals. It is also encouraging that the Government through the Economic Planning Unit in the Prime Minister's Department (EPU), has committed to aligning the Twelfth Malaysia Plan with the global goals.

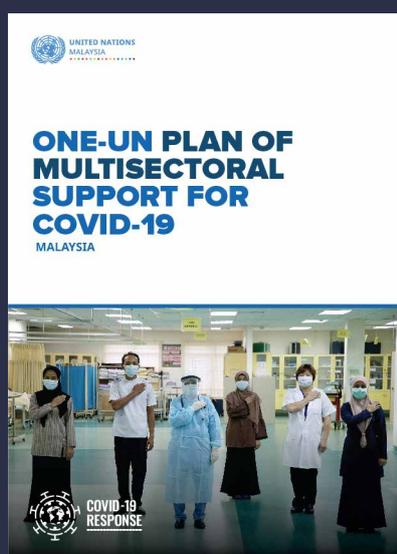


Chapter 2

DELIVERING FOR MALAYSIA DURING THE PANDEMIC

2.1 UN MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING IN MALAYSIA

During 2020, the 20 UN agencies supporting Malaysia, both resident and non-resident, operated under their own managements, but within the wider UN Country Team (UNCT) and with the coordination of the UN Resident Coordinator (RC). Supported by a dedicated team, the RC is accredited as a representative of the UN Secretary-General to the Government of Malaysia.



With the rollout of global UN reform, enacted in 2019, coordination efforts in Malaysia were strengthened throughout 2020. In March, the UN in Malaysia compiled and presented the overarching **United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSCDF)** to guide all programmatic activities in Malaysia over the five years between 2021 and 2025. The final draft is currently out for consultation with Government counterparts and is expected to be formally endorsed in mid-2021. Further details are provided in the final chapter of this report.

Agencies delivered support during 2020 under their own programming frameworks and annual work plans. In recognition of the need to respond to the pandemic, the UNCT set-out its rapid response in the One UN Plan of Multisectoral Support for COVID-19 Preparedness, Response and Recovery. Published in July 2020, this set out new and repurposed programming to support Malaysia's emergency response to the pandemic and the immediate socio-economic fallout.

Subsequently, the UN under the leadership of the RC and UNDP as technical lead developed the Socio-economic Response Plan for COVID-19 (SERP). The SERP includes five pillars of activity – health first, protecting people, economic response and recovery, macroeconomic response and multilateral collaboration, and social cohesion and community resilience. The SERP presents an integrated package of interventions to enable a sustainable and inclusive recovery. It was preceded by a thorough Socio-economic Impact Analysis based on a series of UN agency studies and surveys.

Framed as an offer of support to national efforts, the SERP seeks to augment and complement the work of the Government of Malaysia, recognizing the UN's key comparative advantages: an ability to deliver high level policy and technical advice; undertake additional data gathering and research; conduct advocacy; and directly serve hard to reach and underserved groups. The latter specifically includes refugee and migrant communities.

The interventions set out in the SERP form the basis of many of the results reported in the following sections of this report. Consultations on the SERP with Government were held and remain ongoing. The SERP is a living document and subject to regular updates of its situational analysis and programming proposals.

2.2 HEADLINE RESULTS

UN achievements for the year are set out under four sets of key results:

2

**2.2.1
Responding to the
COVID-19 crisis**

0

**2.2.2
Maintaining progress
towards the SDGs and
leaving no one behind**

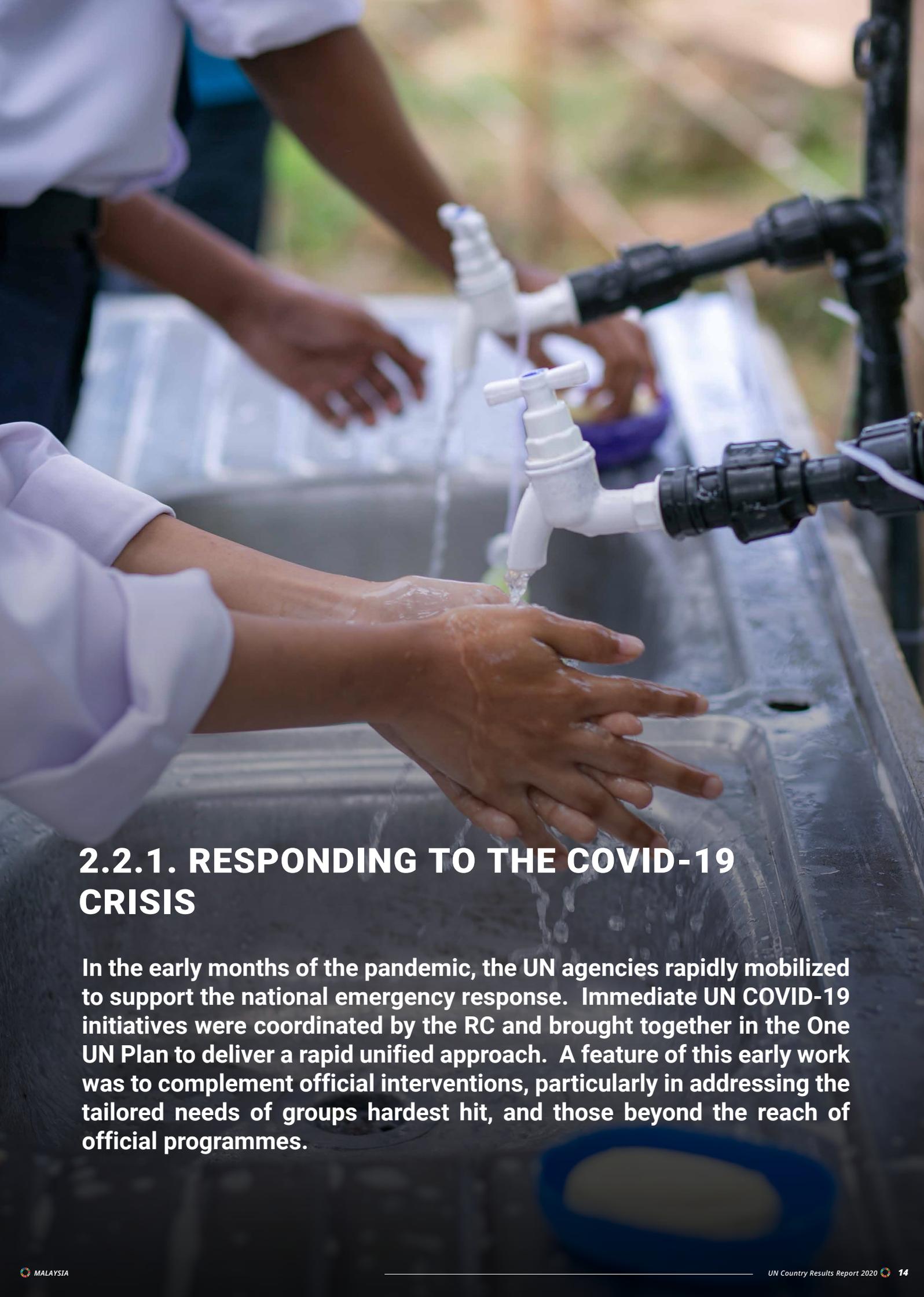
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**2.2.3
Helping Malaysia
to build back better**

0

**2.2.4
Supporting the global
COVID-19 response
from Malaysia**

These recognize the centrality of the COVID-19 emergency, while also linking near term interventions to the realization of longer-term developmental needs defined by Malaysia's national planning goals and the SDG targets. Results are supported by stories and testimonies from the recipients and key national counterparts.



2.2.1. RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS

In the early months of the pandemic, the UN agencies rapidly mobilized to support the national emergency response. Immediate UN COVID-19 initiatives were coordinated by the RC and brought together in the One UN Plan to deliver a rapid unified approach. A feature of this early work was to complement official interventions, particularly in addressing the tailored needs of groups hardest hit, and those beyond the reach of official programmes.

Delivering emergency supplies and hygiene and building supportive online communities.



Through **UNICEF's** partnership with Mercy Malaysia, **73,500** vulnerable children were reached with critical supplies including: **277,000** face masks, **43,334** soap bars and **2,200** hand sanitizers. Working with vulnerable families in Klang Valley and in Sabah, UNICEF also supported face to face health education, and ChildLine support for those suffering from mental health issues. Recipients were low-income families living in public housing projects, refugee children, children with disabilities, children in immigration detention centres and undocumented children attending community learning centres.

“
... masks are quite expensive, there are parents who work on plantations, they have no money to buy masks. The students educated their parents when they returned home... they are role models to their parents...”

Anonymized Key Informant in Sabah.

... this support is very useful... we don't get any other assistance. The teachers also don't have money to buy masks, we have to be very frugal.

Leader of Community Learning Centres.



UNDP working with Government and the private sector enabled the supply of 40,300 isolation gowns for hospitals and helped equip Malaysia's network of quarantine and treatment centres.

UNDP working with Malaysia's National Disaster Management Agency's (NADMA) equipped selected COVID-19 quarantine and treatment centres to expand capacity, and to reduce barriers to access for vulnerable communities. In partnership with the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) and the Malaysian Manufacturers Association (MPMA), UNDP was pivotal in strengthening national self-sufficiency in PPE production, through the repurposing of industrial production lines, resources and factory operations.





KitaConnect the online network, supported by UNICEF, reached out to hundreds of young people, sharing COVID-19 health messages. This network also combated isolation and alienation by enabling dialogue and social networking.

“

Participants in KitaConnect

"I was proud to be there! I got to share my skills with other people. It was a way for me to share what I have been doing with other people..."

At the beginning of the pandemic, I was too scared to go out. I stayed home all day and did not go out at least for 3 weeks... I was very scared. This really affected social life..."

"I engaged in ... platforms where students from all over Malaysia come together on a zoom chat, ... chatting, sharing info and opinions."

”





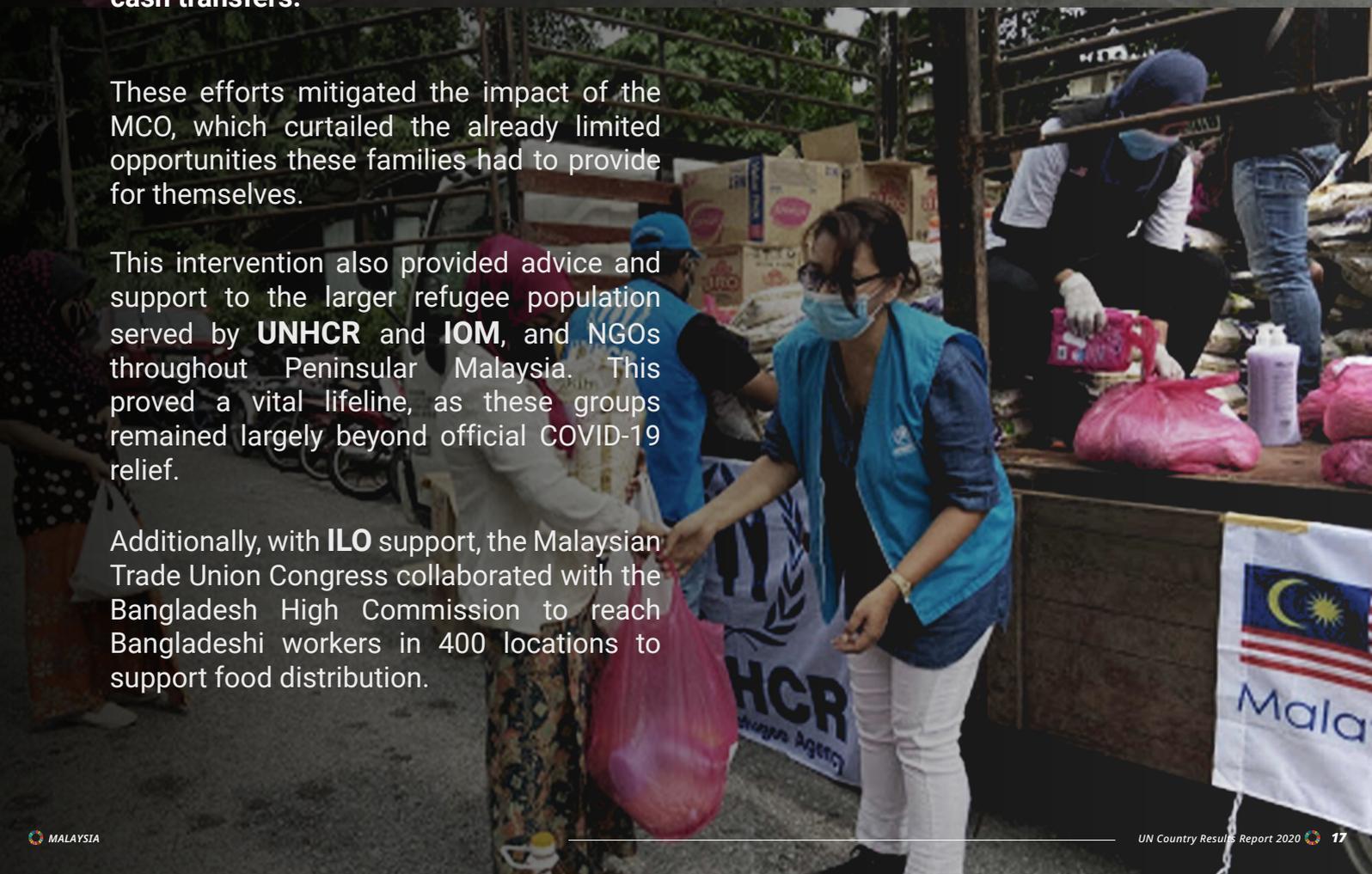
Rapid income support and food assistance for refugees and migrant workers.

Some 8,000 vulnerable migrant and refugee households received food packages and over 6,000 households received cash transfers.

These efforts mitigated the impact of the MCO, which curtailed the already limited opportunities these families had to provide for themselves.

This intervention also provided advice and support to the larger refugee population served by **UNHCR** and **IOM**, and NGOs throughout Peninsular Malaysia. This proved a vital lifeline, as these groups remained largely beyond official COVID-19 relief.

Additionally, with **ILO** support, the Malaysian Trade Union Congress collaborated with the Bangladesh High Commission to reach Bangladeshi workers in 400 locations to support food distribution.



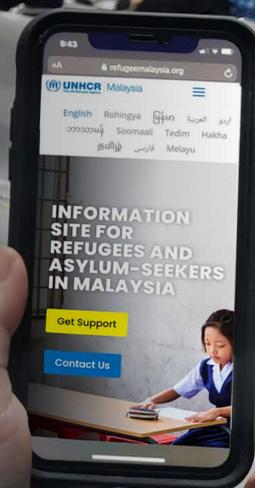
Informing the vulnerable on distancing, hygiene, and rights.

UNHCR and **WHO** online materials became go-to information sources during the pandemic.

UNHCR established a COVID-19 information portal within days of the pandemic being declared, dedicated to informing thousands of supported refugee households.

UNHCR launched the Refugee-Malaysia.org information portal to help refugees and asylum-seekers have easy access to information on protection and assistance in Malaysia, especially during the COVID-19 lockdown when movement was difficult. Content on the site increased significantly following the outbreak of infection - on prevention, treatment, and testing, and the rules governing the MCO. Hotlines in Burmese, Chin, Rohingya, Persian, Tamil, Urdu, Arabic, and Somali languages, were also supported.

WHO continued to maintain an authoritative online library on COVID-19 accessed by citizens, NGOs and official actors, and has provided (to date) 34 update bulletins on the pandemic.



IOM reached out to over 38,000 refugees and migrants with 19 language specific materials among the communities and CSOs it works with.

 <p>COVID-19 JOM BICARA FAKTA</p> <p>EDISI #01 19 MAY 2020</p> <p>UCAPAN KEBENCIAN & XENOFOBIA</p> <p>Retorik sind sentimen anti-migran, ucapan berbau kebencian dan penghinaan risiko gangguan serta keganasan menyulitkan migran untuk tampil melakukan ujian saringan Covid-19.</p>	 <p>கோவிட்-19: பேசும் உண்மைகள்</p> <p>கேள்வி #01 19 MAY 2020</p> <p>வேறுக்கத்தக்க பேச்சு மற்றும் சீனோபேபியா (தீவிர வேறுபாடு அல்லது வெளிநாட்டினரின் பயம்)</p> <p>வேறுக்கத்தக்க பேச்சு மற்றும் துன்புறுத்தல் மூலம் பெயர்ந்தோர் கோவிட்-19 பரிசோதனை செய்வதற்கு முன் வருவதனை கடினமாக்கலாம், ஆபத்தானதாகவும் ஆக்கலாம்.</p>	 <p>冠病19: 來談談事實</p> <p>話題 #01 19 MAY 2020</p> <p>仇恨言論與仇外心理</p> <p>仇恨言論及陸續的騷擾和辱罵使到移民尚未進行冠病檢測更加困難及危險。</p>
<p>INFORMASI TIDAK PASTI</p> <p>Informasi palsu boleh membahayakan nyawa. Berita berasaskan sumber yang tidak sah, penyebaran berita palsu di media sosial, gambar dan video migran yang dimanipulasi memberi impak negatif yang membahayakan kesihatan fizikal dan mental komuniti migran.</p>	<p>தவறான தகவல்</p> <p>தவறான தகவல் உயிர்களை ஆபத்தில் ஆழ்த்துகிறது. உறுதியற்ற தகவல்கள், சமூகமேதைமையில் வெளிப்படும் செய்திகள் செய்திகள் மூலம் பெயர்ந்தோர் மற்றும் போன்ற மாதிரி மற்றும் வீடியோக்கள் போன்றவை மூலம் பெயர்ந்தோர் சமூகங்களை உடல் உடன தீயமான வாழ்வை பறிக்கிறது.</p>	<p>错误信息</p> <p>错误信息危害生命。未经证实的消息来源和社交媒体上有关移民的假新闻、照片及视频都对整个移民的身体及心理造成极度伤害。</p>
<p>STIGMA & DISKRIMINASI</p> <p>Stigma mampu mendorong individu menyembunyikan penyakit untuk menghindari diskriminasi dan menghalang migran untuk tampil mendapatkan rawatan kesihatan.</p>	<p>களங்கம் மற்றும் பாடுபாடு</p> <p>களங்கம் மற்றும் ஏற்படுவதை தடுப்பதற்கு மக்கள் இடையே அகலக்கூறுகிறது மற்றும் மூலம் பெயர்ந்தோர் கடினமான சேவைகளை நாடுவதையும் தடுக்கிறது.</p>	<p>羞辱和歧视</p> <p>羞辱和歧视会让人害羞地去隐藏自己的疾病，也妨碍了移民前去寻求医疗治疗。</p>
<p>SOLIDARITI</p> <p>Di seabak wajah seorang migran, terdapat kisah tersendiri. Kisah tentang harapan dan perubahan. Serta dialog dalam usaha saling memahami dan mendalami kecekalan dan ketahanan migran menempuhi perjalanan yang dipenuhi cabaran.</p>	<p>ஒற்றுமை</p> <p>ஒவ்வொரு மூலம் பெயர்ந்தவருக்கும் பின்னால் ஒரு கதை உள்ளது. ஒரு வீதியோரத்தாக காலாகாலமாக பற்றிய கதை. ஒருவருக்கு ஒன்று நம்மிடையேயே பழக்கங்கள், தகவல், சேகரிப்புகள் மற்றும் கதையில் பற்றி பரிந்துகொள்ள உரையாடலில் இணையலாம்.</p>	<p>团结一致</p> <p>每一位移民的背后都有一个故事，一段充满意义的故事。同时也反映出我们对整个社会的价值。请多探讨以累积此了解这趟充满希望、困苦、韧性及勇气的旅程。</p>

ILO reached out to over 800 vulnerable workers with a Rights at Work Information Pack containing information on their employment rights, immigration status and access to COVID-19 related healthcare.

<p>YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS A MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKER IN MALAYSIA</p> 	<p>আপনার অধিকার এবং দায়িত্ব জানুন: মালয়শেয়ারিয়ার অভিবাসী শ্রমিক</p> 	<p>HAK DAN TANGGUNG JAWAB: Pekerja Migran di Sektor Perkebunan di Malaysia</p> 
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Supporting Women During Lockdown.



Helping to make vulnerable women more secure.

Led by **UNFPA**, six UN agencies (including **ILO, IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF** and **WFP**) enabled mass communications on sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence, the training of over **4,400** community leaders, and the delivery of 5,000 dignity kits to the vulnerable.

6 UN Agencies

In partnership, with the Women's Aid Organisation (WAO), **4,429** women community leaders from Selangor, Johor and Kedah were trained on combating GBV.

Delivered **5,000** dignity kits to migrant and refugee women. These proved to be vital interventions for women suffering from isolation and at risk, and unable to procure personal hygiene products.

Provided legal, health and psychological advice services for women and girls in refugee and migrant communities, and in low-income families, were scaled up to cover six states.

“

I am sure I speak for all women here, in recommending that WAO regularly conduct these courses, and help us provide knowledge to all women out there on... accessing the right channels for victims to seek protection.

Johor B40 participant from GBV workshop for women community leaders.

...these packs are super helpful... especially now that we have no income and because of the MCO.

Refugee 20 years old, and mother of two.

”



2.2.2 MAINTAINING PROGRESS TOWARDS THE SDGs AND LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

As the pandemic and public health measures were prolonged, agencies worked in key priority areas to maintain the momentum of SDG progress in Malaysia. These efforts were informed by the pre-existing SDG challenges faced by Malaysia, and diagnostics of the impacts of the MCO restrictions, particularly, on schooling and healthcare. A further priority was the need to develop new data sources to tackle the socio-economic impacts of the crisis, to supplement regular COVID-19 infections updates and high frequency economic data.

Education for all during the pandemic.

Over 3 million children were enabled to continue learning during school closures; 3,200 teachers participated in online training; and some 10,000 refugee children were provided with learning resources.



Via the Digital Educational Learning Initiative Malaysia (DELIMa) **UNICEF** supported the Ministry of Education (MOE) to develop innovative e-learning platforms that secured continued schooling at all levels. The agency also helped to establish a teacher digital learning community, offering training and support, and reaching around 2,000 schools with around half located in rural areas. Working with CSOs, **UNHCR** provided digital infrastructure to support online and blended learning for refugee children in the communities it serves, in temporary learning centres.

Combating Polio outbreaks in Eastern Malaysia.

UN agencies supported the delivery of vaccinations for 879,802 children under 13 years of age.

WHO and **UNICEF** donated 2.5 million doses of Polio Type 2 vaccines for local health authorities. Operating under strict COVID-19 restrictions such as school closures (affecting school health services for vaccinations) and difficult terrain, agencies facilitated distribution of vaccines to remote locations, using a fleet off-road vehicle and a helicopter (pictured). These joint efforts succeed in containing this serious outbreak.

Maintaining the health of migrants.

Services delivered by IOM to refugees, migrants and others, protected their health despite ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, which severely impacted operational capacities.

Enabling the ongoing resettlement of close to **1,200** people.

Over **6,500** people in areas with high rates of COVID-19 were triaged by UN medical personnel.

Over **1,900** health pre-travel assessments were undertaken.

5,900 vaccine doses were administered to refugees being resettled to third countries.

Boosting livelihoods and preventing the vulnerable from falling into poverty.

1,437

Indigenous households' incomes and access to key services secured

Working with groups in six states, UNDP supported Orang Asli families' livelihoods focusing on traditional crafts and natural products, and enabled access to energy and water.

11,400

Migrant and informal workers received legal and other employment advice

Independent CSO advice centres, supported by ILO, offered legal advice to 3,861 informal sector workers, and emergency referrals and guidance to a further 7,543.

E-commerce Platforms

E-commerce pilots launched in remote areas

Two UNDP-sponsored e-commerce pilot projects in rural Sabah and Sarawak, enabled producers of natural products to access wider markets, via the Kondoos! platform. The support package included marketing advice and logistics planning. The Sabah pilot saw participants' profits rise by 15% within two weeks of its launch in December 2020, and sales have continued to grow in 2021.

“

"We could not sell our products during this pandemic, especially when ... our weekly market closed... Thankfully we could distribute our product through ...Kondos!... (this) has helped us to promote our product, with packing and collection from home, it is super-efficient!"

Marinus, Producer, Moyog, Sabah

"During the pandemic, the extended curfew hindered us from selling our Engkabang butter at the market. This project really can expand sales... to other districts and states".

Sawau ak. Gawing Rh. Bajau, Julau, Selangau, Sarawak

"...Kondoos! has been very helpful for the sellers to reach a wider group of the general public and in building trust among the buyers."

Eve, Community Coordinators, Moyog, Sabah

”

Keeping a focus on the environment.

01.

1,400 youth voices were captured in the National Youth Climate Change Survey

02.

1,500 municipal officials were trained on sustainable cities

03.

Malaysia held its second Urban Forum

04.

43 major corporates and others adopted the Clean Seas Pledge.

Although COVID-19 understandably, came to dominate the policy discourse, and placed significant operational restrictions on programming, UN agencies progressed ahead with pivotal work on climate change and environmental degradation.

UNDP provided crucial technical support to the Malaysian government in updating its Nationally Determined Contribution to the UNFCCC, and together with **UNICEF** deployed a nationwide survey and a youth dialogue to engage Malaysian youth on climate change perceptions and climate action.

UNIDO engaged with city governments on the financing of sustainable cities.

UNEP ran a series of activities on plastic pollution and the health of marine ecosystems.

The World's first hybrid national urban forum was convened by the Government and Urbanice Malaysia in collaboration with **UN-Habitat** and **UNESCAP**.

YOUTH*
TAKE ACTION ON
CLIMATE CHANGE NOW!

UNDP UNICEF
SUPPORTED BY
EcoKnights
INSPIRING SUSTAINABLE LIVING

TEXT
NYCC
to +6017 2017 927
on WhatsApp

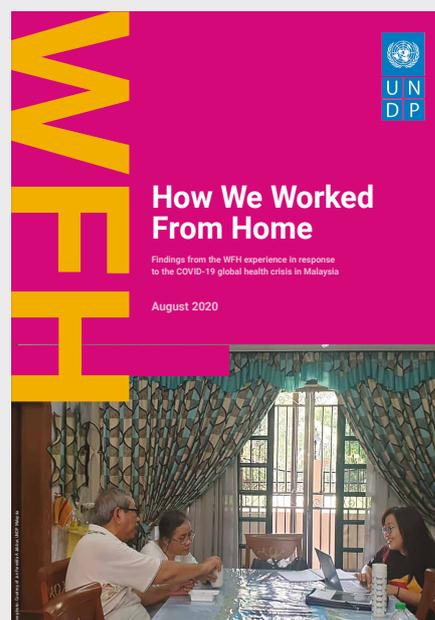
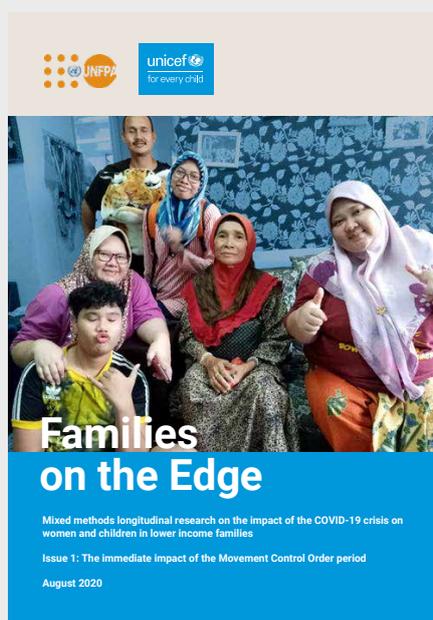
SCAN HERE

* Survey open to youth aged 15 - 35 years old

NATIONAL YOUTH CLIMATE CHANGE SURVEY #YouthClimateActionMY

Tracking the economic and social impacts.

Six separate survey instruments, one iterated three times, provided near real-time data and made a major contribution to policy discourse and media dialogues.



UNIDO's Manufacturing Rapid Impact Assessment, provided a barometer-type survey of manufacturing as a key economic sector.

Sponsored by **UNICEF** and **UNFPA**, the Families on the Edge (FOTE) employed an innovative three round panel data survey revisiting around 500 urban low-income households and applying a mixed qualitative/ quantitative approach. By engaging and sharing analysis directly with Government, and via media interest, FOTE helped inform policy debates and responses. Delivered during the MCO, **UNDP's** Rapid Assessment of Household Income Survey (RAHIS) was a large sample survey (6,500 respondents) focused on low-income families and provided valuable dataset in analysing impacts on livelihoods and living conditions.

UNICEF and **UNDP's** *U-Report on Youth Financial Constraints* examined gaps in the Government's COVID-19 relief packages and made recommendations for improved effectiveness. **UNDP's** How We Worked from Home reached over 1,000 employees and over 200 employers to examine new normal work modalities during the MCO and the agency's COVID-19 Grassroots Solution Mapping Campaign was concluded with youth groups in June 2020, highlighting pressing mental health and education issues and innovative solutions to digital inequalities. These surveys together have succeeded in highlighting the equity dimensions of the pandemic, which are inherent to the SDGs.

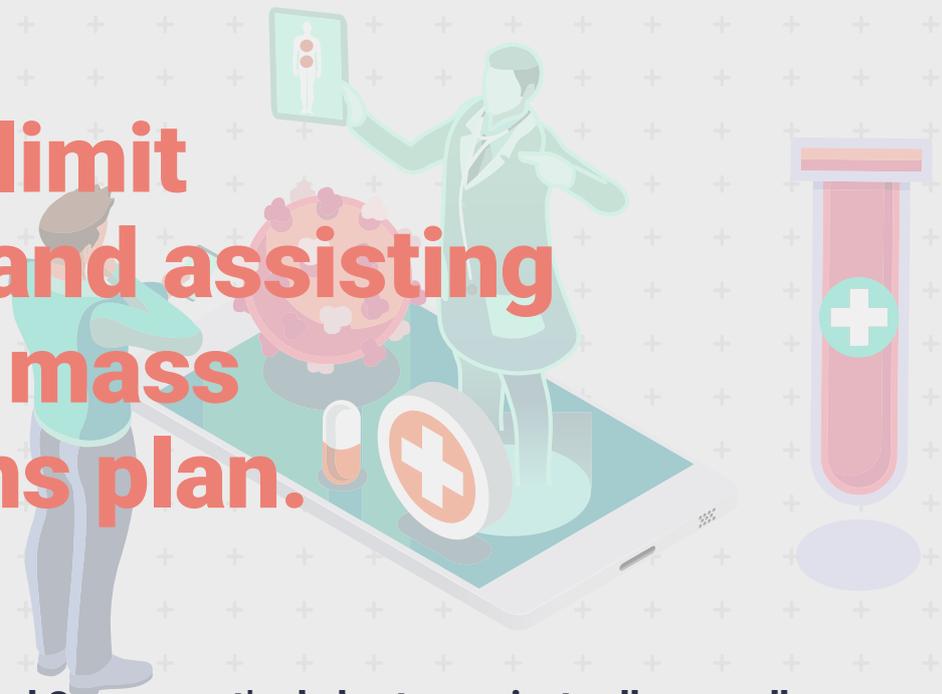


2.2.3

HELPING MALAYSIA TO RECOVER AND BUILD BACK BETTER

As Malaysia entered recovery from COVID-19 crisis, the UN sought first to consolidate the positive dynamics in infection control and support the social and economic rebound to ensure recovery is inclusive of all. Second, agencies have promoted the core principle of building back better, recognizing that the crisis also offers opportunities to rethink policies and approaches. Coordinated by the RCO through the SERP, UN responses stressed the importance of resilience in the face of multiple vulnerabilities; moreover, that the resources made available through fiscal stimulus and recovery spending provide impetus for greater social inclusion, and green development pathways.

Helping to limit infections and assisting Malaysia's mass vaccinations plan.



Successful advocacy supported Government's pledge to vaccinate all - regardless of nationality or status, and enabled access for doses covering 3.2 million people via the COVAX facility.

UNCT advocated for Malaysia's participation in the global facility and the expansion of vaccinations to include non-nationals. **WHO** supported its primary counterpart, the Ministry of Health on surveillance and risk assessment, on modelling capacity, providing technical guidance and training on infection prevention and control. Several UN agencies jointly supported the development of risk communications and community engagement plans, including crisis communication and reporting on adverse events.

Promoting cohesion and combating hate speech.

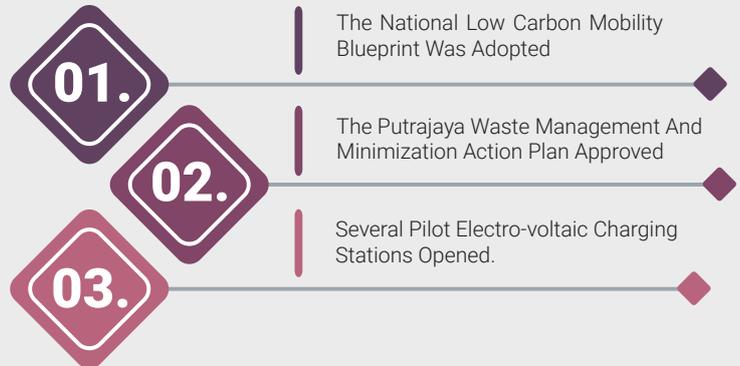
40 senior journalists and media practitioners were trained on reporting on stigmatized groups; agencies conducted advocacy to combat hate speech associated with the pandemic; the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights developed, and international best practices on the Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE) exchanged.



IOM engaged with the media and is working with marginalized minority communities to combat stigma in reporting and in civic spaces. **ILO** engaged with the Malaysia Bar Association and 62 other CSOs to examine alternatives to mass arrests and detentions of documented and undocumented migrant workers, particularly those displaced by COVID-19. **UNDP** worked with the authorities to build capacity on PVE policy responses. And with business interests and the government, UNDP initiated a dialogue on the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights based on the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs).

Promoting a greener economy.

Key to greener outcomes has been **UNIDO's** recently completed Energy Efficiency Low-carbon Transport (E-ELCT) project and **UNDP's** Green Technology for the Application of Low Carbon Cities project. UNIDO's initiative included the Langkawi Green island initiative. UNDP has supported the implementation of low carbon technology and capacity building at local level – in partnership with local authorities in Petaling Jaya, Putrajaya, Cyberjaya, Iskandar Malaysia and Hang Tuah Jaya.



Langkawi Green Island



A key outcome of the UNIDO E-ELCT project is the energy transformation of Langkawi to a low-carbon island. This year saw the opening of electric vehicle charging stations, handing over of E-bikes and the building of mass public awareness on green consumption and production.

“

Cooperation (with the UN) will substantially complement the ongoing initiative undertaken... with 10 charging stations installed on the island.

In line with the Paris Agreement, Malaysia is committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions per unit of GDP by 45% by 2030 relative to the emission intensity of GDP in 2005.

Malaysian Government official

”

Enabling an inclusive recovery.



UN support to the Twelfth Malaysia Plan built on well-established engagement with the preparation of 15 policy briefs submitted at the start of the development process in late 2019.

The RC led a series of UN agency-government dialogues: the UN75 National Conversation, Our Shared Global Vision and Collective Commitment to Multilateralism with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in July; Eradicating Poverty and Addressing Vulnerabilities in the New Normal with the Economic Action Council in September; Protecting the Rights of Migrant Workers with the Ministry of Human Resources in November; and the Human Rights Day dialogue, Recover Better – Stand Up for Human Rights together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Minister’s Department and the National Human Rights Commission (SUHAKAM), in December.

UNDP hosted: a webinar for the International Day on Eradicating Poverty; a forum on the creative economy and the SDGs; and an event launching its flagship global Human Development Report.

UN Habitat supported integrated urban development targeting early recovery and building back better, via: urban and transport planning in Iskandar; the Green Transport Corridor Implementation Strategy in Melaka City; city profiling in Penang; digital security in Shah Alam; and capacity building in Kuala Selangor, Subang Jaya and Tawau.



2.2.4 SUPPORTING THE GLOBAL COVID-19 RESPONSE FROM MALAYSIA

In addition to supporting Malaysia, the UN hosts two global service centres for UNDP and WHO, and a regional supply centre for WFP logistics. These operations played a vital role during 2020 supporting UN delivery in the region and around the world.

Supplying equipment and enabling the global emergency response.

Based in Subang Airport,
UNHRD
managed by WFP

Delivered
212
consignments

To
83
countries

Transported over
6,500
essential personnel



This regional hub managed by WFP, stepped up to meet the global COVID-19 challenge, supplying countries around the world with essential goods, and specifically medical supplies, via its warehouse in Malaysia and established supply chains. This network also provided an air bridge for key personnel supporting the humanitarian response in Asia and the Pacific, with 77 charter flights operated to East Timor, Fiji, Laos PDR, Myanmar, Nepal and Papua New Guinea. These operations also contributed some USD 5 million (MYR 20.7 million) to Malaysia's struggling aviation sector.

Enabling global UN operations to deliver throughout the crisis.

The two global service centres operated by UNDP and WHO in Malaysia, supported around 200 locations and processed over 600,000 transactions throughout the COVID-19 crisis and were pivotal to the UN's operational integrity as many countries were in lockdown.

The WHO Global Service Centre carried out all its worldwide Procurement, Finance, Human Resources and Payroll administrative services without major disruption. The Centre processed around 160,000 invoice payments, 150,000 payroll payments, 68,000 procurement orders and 43,000 personnel transactions in 2020.

By recruiting over 80 new staff, the UNDP Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC) was able to expand services and the number of clients. The centre: provided procurement support for USD 4 million in medical products and 170 passenger vehicles, including 78 ambulances; set-up 139 COVID-19 related revenue/ donation agreements with a total value of USD 191 million for 53 countries; and processed 176,646 finance and 8,890 HR transactions. The GSSC also continued with roll-out of the Clustering initiative in support of the UN Reform Agenda, which aims to centralize finance, human resources and procurement.

2.3 FORGING PARTNERSHIPS FOR COVID-19 RECOVERY AND SDG ACHIEVEMENT

The UN's approach throughout 2020 has been to support the Government, key stakeholders and people living in Malaysia, promoting a Whole of Government and Whole of Society response to the impacts of COVID-19, but also, to the longer-term SDG challenges faced. This builds on work initiated in 2019 including: the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights (UPR), the visit of the UN Special Rapporteur on Poverty, and the SDG Summit, which the UN and the Government jointly hosted, with the then Prime Minister officiating.

Government has remained committed to the SDGs and has aligned forthcoming Twelfth Malaysia Plan, and for the first time in 2020, its National Budget, to the SDGs. Moreover, leaving no one behind as a central principle of the 2030 Agenda is fully reflected within the Government's Shared Prosperity Vision 2030.

This commitment is also evident at the coalface, with Government revising the national poverty line to reflect a higher population proportion, developing of a database to track delivery of UPR recommendations and in the nature and level of its support to fighting the health and socio-economic impacts of the pandemic. We note some 15% of the 2021 national budget has been earmarked for the recovery. This builds on the considerable additional spending in 2020 to stimulate the economy while also protecting the vulnerable.



In the longer term, financing remains an important means of implementation issue for delivering the SDGs. The UN has and continues to work with Government on three key workstreams.

1st

The UN gratefully acknowledges the generous level of government support provided to many UN agencies in supporting their work in Malaysia. This is a vital resource since the level of UN core and donor funds is low given Malaysia's growing level of national income. We welcome the announcement of further support to foster UN and CSO collaborative projects for SDG delivery outside regular public service channels, with a grant of some MYR 20 million (USD 5 million) within the 2021 budget to the MySDG Trust Fund.

2nd

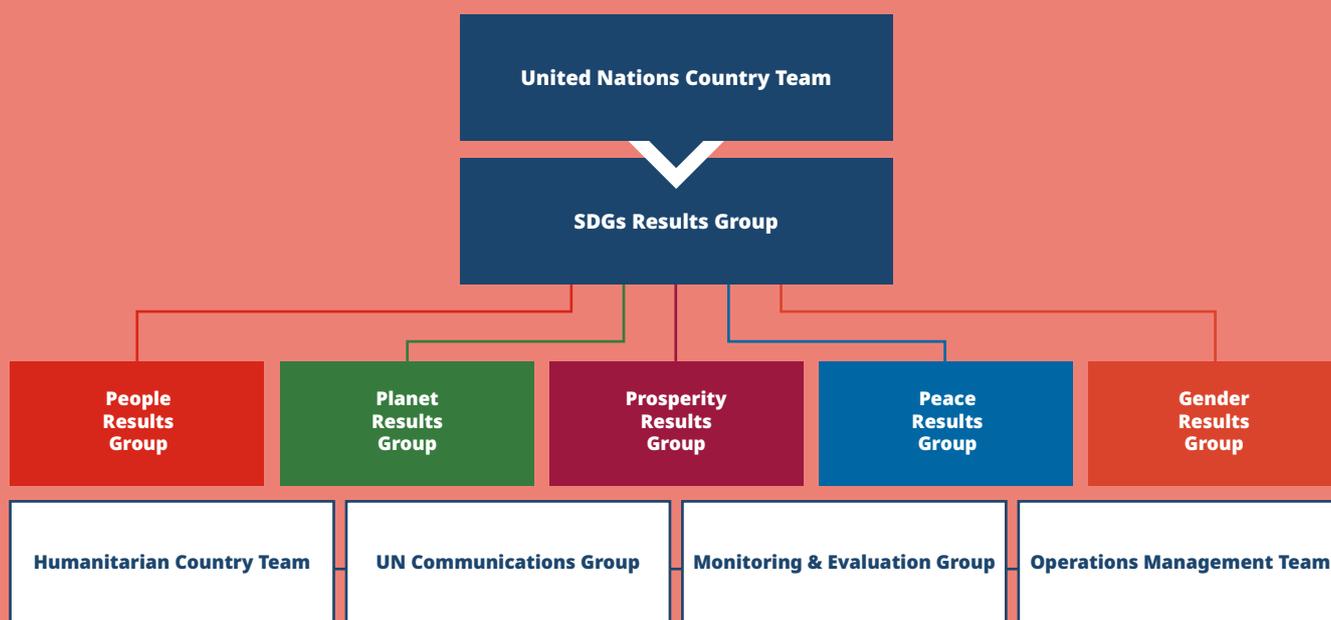
The UN has engaged the private sector via the TogetherforSDGs hub. This initiative continued throughout 2020 to advocate and support businesses on the SDGs, and despite the limitations imposed by the pandemic has delivered new levels of commitment. The UNCT continued to engage during 2020 with the Malaysia CSO-SDG Alliance, an umbrella group representing some 300 organizations, and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the SDGs (APPG), a nonpartisan grouping of members of Parliament, to support inclusive approaches to advance the global goals. These two groups figure in the Government's plans to develop the forthcoming second Malaysia Voluntary National Review of SDG Progress (VNR), adopted at the close of the year.

3rd

In line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the UN successfully bid for UN global funds and is delivering support to Government to help strengthen Malaysia's wider SDG financing arrangements via the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) Initiative. This joint project, led by UNDP and incorporating UNICEF and UNCDF, is working with the EPU, the Department of Statistics (DOSM), and the Ministry of Finance on strengthening the SDG commitment, SDG data, compilation of a Development Finance Assessment (DFA) and capacity building on SDG budgeting and costing.

2.4 THE UN WORKING BETTER TOGETHER

With the rollout of UN reform, the 8 resident and 12 non-resident agencies have formed a more cohesive country team (noting that in 2021, this rises to 21 agencies with the addition of the International Telecommunications Union). Jointness in purpose and action has been strengthened during the UNSDCF development process, with cross agency working facilitated by five standing Results Groups, focused on the Cooperation Framework's strategic properties, plus gender as a crosscutting property (see graphic).



These arrangements proved pivotal in shaping the UN's response to COVID-19 in Malaysia, enabling the rapid dissemination of information and data, and linking agencies working on the health response and service delivery to those charged with supporting socio-economic policymaking. Key resulting joint areas of activity were:

- Technical assistance to support COVID-19 data analysis and risk assessment, public health and social measures, leveraging WHO's core capacities and drawing in others such as ILO and IOM. The UN worked in tandem with the Ministry of Health to provide effective backstopping, and access to global data and facilities, including latterly, the COVAX initiative.
- Service delivery to those marginalized groups beyond the reach of public services - with IOM and UNCHR delivering health and educational services, and social protection during lockdown periods to refugees and migrant households.
- Data gathering and analytics, whereby agencies delivered a series of surveys ranging from the iterated **Families on the Edge** Survey to one-off barometer-type surveys, these were matched by analytical studies on the crisis commissioned by the UN RCO. These materials were then synthesized within a Socio-economic Impact Analysis.

As the pandemic progressed and Malaysia succeeded in containing infections, and gradual reopening got underway, the UN collectively set out its offer to Government to support the recovery within the SERP. Building on the UNSDCF, this presented a unified and comprehensive package (with a resource requirement of USD 13.7 million (MYR 56.4 million) of which USD 6.7 million (MYR 27.6 million), some 49% had been mobilized at the end of 2020.

2.5 LEARNING AND IMPROVING

Continuous evaluation of the operating environment, and learning lessons, remained at the core of the UN's approach in Malaysia. This was facilitated by UN reform, allowing for greater peer review and sharing of analysis and experiences.

During 2020, the UN operated without a UNSDCF, as this was still in preparation, and priorities were driven by agency-level plans. Clearly, the major learning event was the pandemic and the socio-economic fallout, and the need to respond efficiently and reconfigure activities. Compilation of the One UN Plan and SERP and its adoption played an important role, particularly in supporting the recovery. Prior to this, new structures established to coordinate and inform agencies. These included the Crisis Management Team (CMT), which coordinated UN preparedness, working arrangements during the pandemic, and ensured business continuity. Agencies also followed up by adapting their Country Programmes and Workplans.



Key Learning Points

1

The need to respond rapidly, flexibly and constructively to official COVID-19 priorities - the UNCT consciously sought to add value by repurposing and reprogramming interventions and mobilizing new resources to deliver tailored support to the Government where it was needed. This required difficult choices, including some pausing of pre-existing programming and re-positioning.

Rapid recognition of operational impacts and reconfiguring working in line with new normal conditions – the public health response, lockdown and containment measures, and staff safety, necessitated the adoption of new working and operating practices. UN agencies also leveraged Malaysia's advanced IT infrastructure to move to virtual working modalities, including event hosting and business operations.

2

3

The value of a renewed focus on UN comparative advantage, embedded in leaving no one behind - within both ongoing and COVID-19 response programming, the UN was strongest where it emphasized equitable and sustained development. This also included advocacy and delivering key services to groups who were most marginalized and often outside of regular public provisioning, notably refugees and migrants.

Maintaining an open and constructive dialogue with Government and leveraging opportunities presented by the new context - throughout the year, the UN and its family of agencies maintained close working relationships with key government partners. This, and the exceptional situation, enabled new entry points and the availability of additional resources to advance a building back better agenda in areas as diverse as social protection and green economy.

4

2.6 MOBILIZING RESOURCES FOR MALAYSIA

2.6.1 OVERVIEW

In 2020, the United Nations, delivered in total, some USD 38.6 million (MYR 160.1 million) of support to Malaysia, around 83% of the budgeted amount.

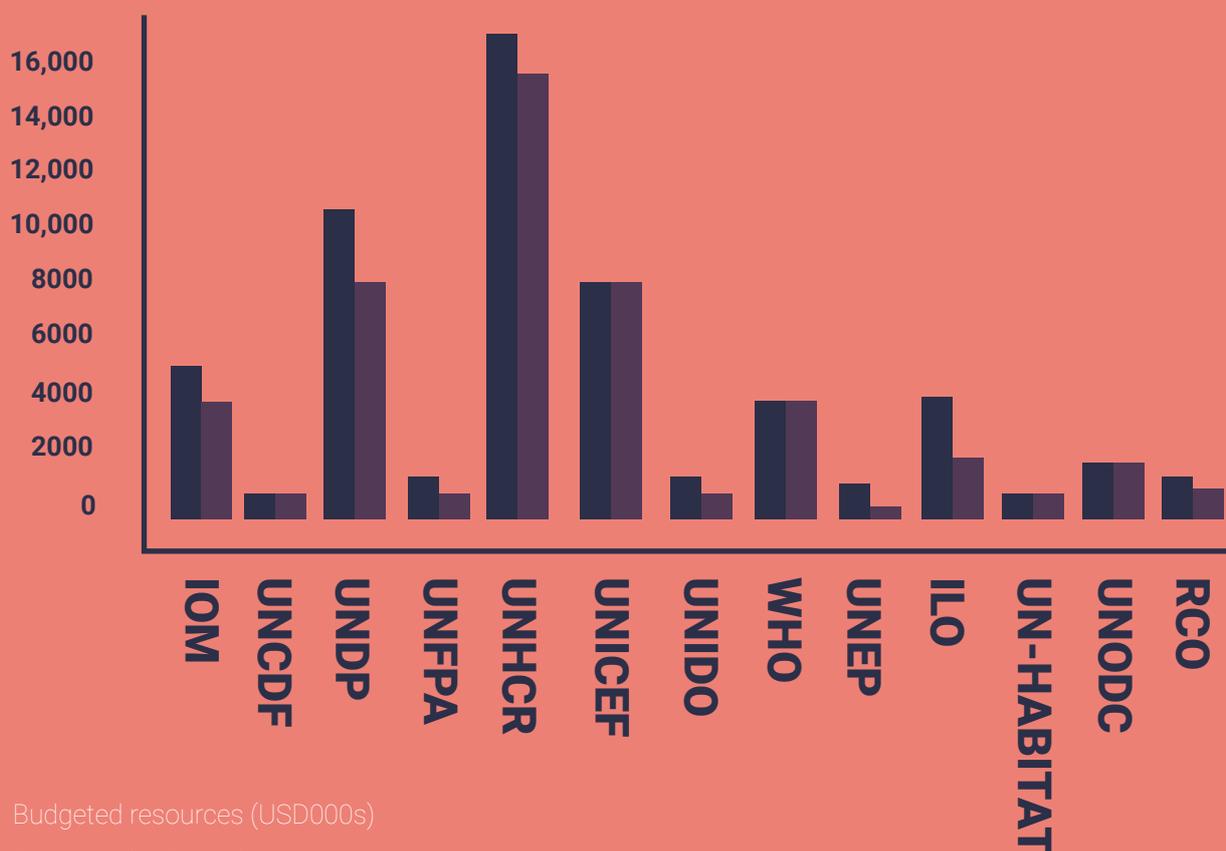
Six of the 12 reporting agencies achieved delivery rates over 90% of the budget. This is a remarkable result given the scale of the pandemic and its impact on agency programming and operations. The four largest agencies, IOM, UNDP, UNICEF and UNHCR together accounted for around 79% of total delivery.

USD 38.6 MILLION

In 2020 the United Nations delivered in total USD 38.6 million (MYR 160.1 million) of support to Malaysia.

83%

The delivery is around 83% of the budgeted amount.

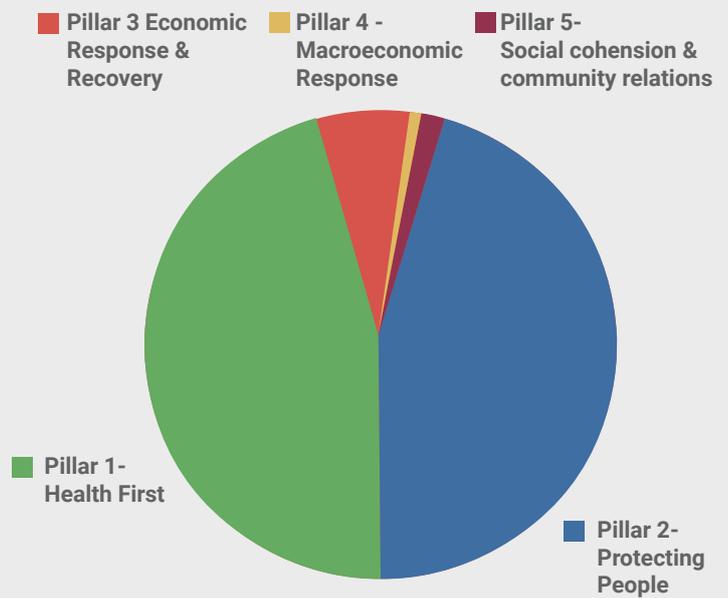
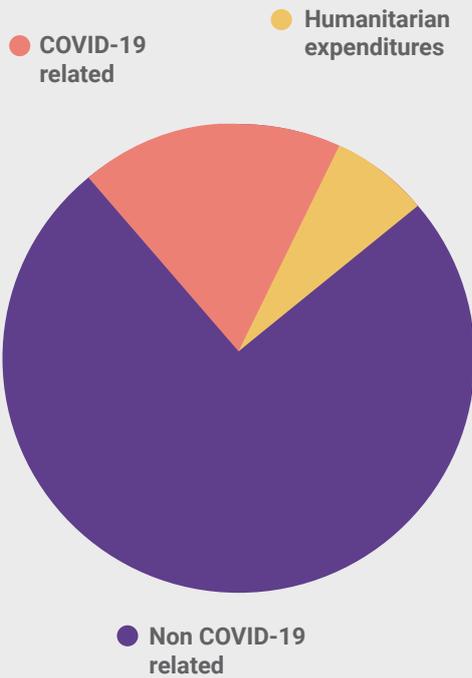


■ Budgeted resources (USD000s)
 ■ Delivered (USD000s)

The level of specific COVID-19 support (new and repurposed monies) reached USD 8.2 million (MYR 34.0 million) by the year end, around 21% of the total. Humanitarian expenditures (excluding COVID-19 related) remained sizeable at USD 4.3 million (MYR 17.8 million), 11% of total spending. However, development spending remained the largest outlay at USD 26.0 million (MYR 107.8 million) and 68% of the outturn. Within COVID-19 related spending, the Health First and Protecting People Pillars (1 & 2) recorded the overwhelming shares at 47% and 46%, respectively.

COVID-19 spending was a sizeable 21% of UN agency outlays.

Within SERP, Pillars 1 & 2, health and protecting people accounted for 93% of (COVID-19) spending.

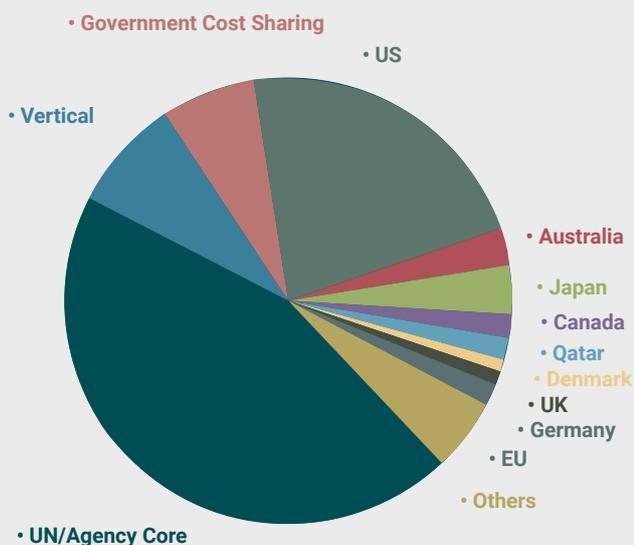
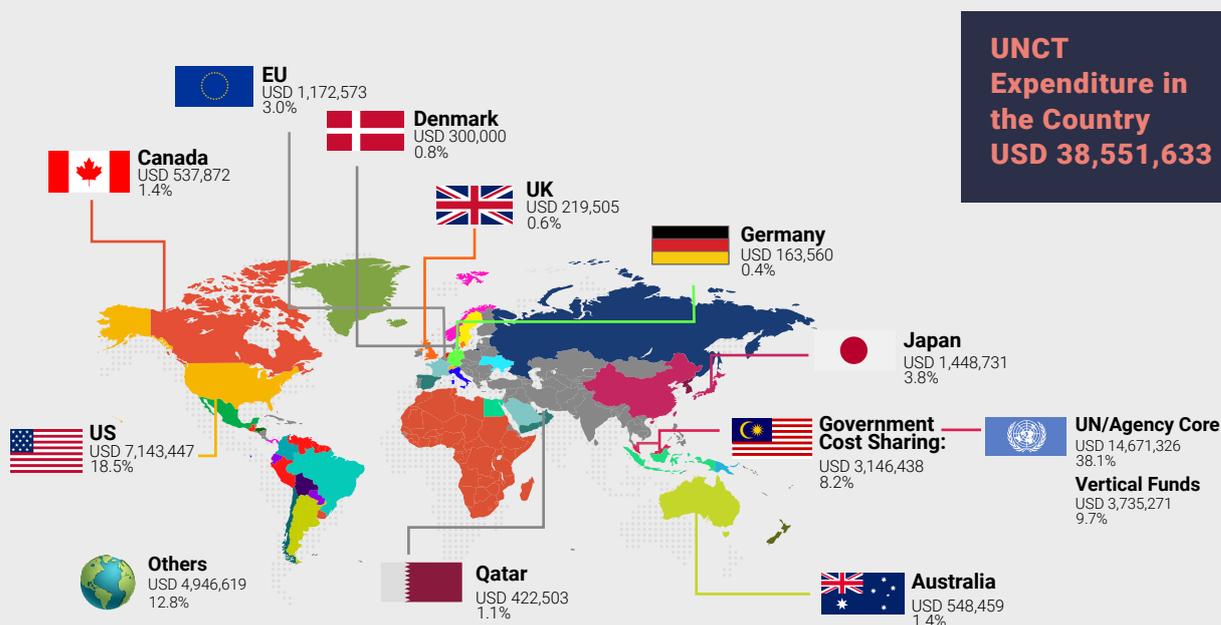


2.6.2 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

UN agencies in Malaysia had a diversified set of funding sources in 2020 (chart and table).

Agencies mobilized around USD 14.8 million (MYR 61.4 million) from external donors in 2020, the largest was the United States (18% of total spending). Cost sharing by the Government of Malaysia (at 8%) was substantial. UN central resources (core and vertical funds) made up around 47% of total expenditures. Sources were highly diversified, underlining the strong resource base. This is very encouraging in the context of an Upper Middle-Income Country.

Our Donors



Sources	USD	Share (%)
Donors		
US	7,143,447	18.5%
Australia	548,459	1.4%
Japan	1,448,731	3.8%
Canada	537,872	1.4%
Qatar	422,503	1.1%
Denmark	300,000	0.8%
UK	219,505	0.6%
Germany	163,560	0.4%
EU	1,172,573	3.0%
Others	4,946,619	12.8%
UN Funds:		
UN/Agency Core	14,671,326	38.1%
Vertical Funds	3,735,271	9.7%
Government Cost Sharing:		
	3,241,766	8.2%
	38,551,633	



Chapter 3

PLANNING FOR THE RECOVERY IN 2021 AND BEYOND

3.1 UNSDCF 2021-2025

Throughout 2020, the UNCT in Malaysia developed and finalized the UNSDCF for the 2021 to 2025 cycle. This is now out for consultation with the Government, with final endorsement expected to take place in June 2021.

The UNSDCF is designed around four Strategic Priorities Areas (SPAs), which align closely with the 5Ps first set out in the Secretary-General's 2015 SDG Synthesis Report:



People

Leaving no one behind - focused on key social services and associated reforms and strengthening of social norms.



Prosperity

Inclusive and sustainable economic growth - enabling equitable growth via women's economic empowerment and decent work, and sustainable urban development.



Planet

Environment, climate change and resilience - supporting decarbonization, resilience and combating environmental derogation.



Peace

Social cohesion, governance and human rights - helping to maintain Malaysia strong community relations, alongside institutional strengthening.

The framework is operationalized as 13 collaborative outputs, as shown below. UN agency plans will be built around these, adopting the outputs verbatim.

UNSCF OUTCOMES	SPA 1: PEOPLE: Leaving No One Behind	SPA 2: PLANET: Environment, Climate Change, and Resilience	SPA 3: PROSPERITY: Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth	SPA 4: PEACE: Social Cohesion, Governance and Human Rights
UNSCF COLLABORATIVE OUTPUTS (CO)	<p>CO 1.1 Sustainable social protection system</p> <p>CO 1.2 Social services are strengthened to ensure access to high quality, equity-focused provision that promotes the wellbeing of all</p> <p>CO 1.3 Adoption of inclusive social norms and values</p>	<p>CO 2.1 Towards a decarbonised and resource efficient economy</p> <p>CO 2.2 Sustainably managed natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystem</p> <p>CO 2.3 Preparedness and resilience against disaster risk</p>	<p>CO 3.1 Inclusive growth and decent work</p> <p>CO 3.2 Women's equality in the economy</p> <p>CO 3.3 Corporate alignment to SDGs and international standards</p> <p>CO 3.4 Sustainable and inclusive urban development</p>	<p>CO 4.1 Inter-ethnic and cultural harmony and cohesion</p> <p>CO 4.2 Inclusive political processes and fundamental freedoms</p> <p>CO 4.3 System of checks and balances across government</p>
ENHANCING RESULTS THROUGH COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS				
Policy Support for SDG Planning and Budgeting	SDG Progress Monitoring, Evaluation, Data and Research	SDG Financing (Including from non-traditional sources)	Social Dialogue and Multi-stakeholder platforms	Global Partnerships / South-South Cooperation

The UNSDCF has been fully updated to reflect the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, within the existing results framework. This builds on the five pillars of the SERP – and its programming efforts to deliver a rapid and inclusive recovery, but one which simultaneously looks to the longer term in building back better - defined in terms of promoting greater social and economic inclusion and securing environmental sustainability. In doing so, the UN recognizes that the pandemic also provides policy impetus for honing aspects of Malaysia's development model.

3.2 UN AGENCIES DELIVERY FOR 2021

Agency objectives for 2021 focus both on the near term, drawing on ongoing SERP programming, and look also to the longer term in seeking to build back better, as set out in the UNSDCF. Agency aims and major activities for the coming year are summarized below under the respective SERP and UNSDCF headings.

Taking near-term recovery-related efforts first:



HEALTH FIRST Supporting roll-out of the national vaccination programme, especially ensuring provision for non-citizen groups; and enabling enhanced “new normal” working conditions, which allow return to work while avoiding COVID-19 infection.



PROTECTING PEOPLE Strengthening distance learning to protect children’s futures; supporting improved mental health provision; and combating gender-based violence during movement restrictions.



ECONOMIC RECOVERY Consolidating social protection reforms and poverty reduction policies, to deliver an inclusive recovery.



MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE Advocating for green investment pathways within recovery and further stimulus spending.



SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS Helping to promote the national unity agenda and combating hate speech.

Activities which speak to the longer-term agenda include:



PEOPLE Assisting Malaysia to plan for demographic aging; advocacy and promoting better information to women on sexual and reproductive health; better securing migrants’ rights by striving to end human trafficking and forced labour.



PLANET Mainstream climate change considerations and nature-based solutions into medium-term development planning under the Twelfth Malaysia Plan; make cities sustainable via promotion of electric vehicles, solar technology and the circular economy concept; promote the opportunities for green value chains and sound management of plastic waste; promote importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services within sector decision-making; and delivery of a database and investment plans to support Malaysia’s REDD+ strategy.



PROSPERITY Boosting productivity via IR4 adoption and improved TVET; supporting SDG financing and private sector engagement for the global goals; and securing labour rights and promoting women’s economic empowerment.



PEACE Supporting the retention of Malaysia’s strong community relations, and the adoption of human rights standards.

Links to Key Materials

UN in Malaysia:

<https://malaysia.un.org/>

UN Socio-economic Response Plan (SERP) for COVID-19 in Malaysia:

<https://malaysia.un.org/en/114558-socio-economic-response-plan-serp>

One-UN Plan of Multisectoral Support For COVID-19 – Malaysia:

<https://malaysia.un.org/en/105124-one-un-plan-multisectoral-support-covid-19-malaysia>

Economic Planning Unit, Twelfth Malaysia Plan:

<https://rmke12.epu.gov.my/>

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