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LEVERAGING ON PARTNERSHIP TO EXPOSE YOUTH TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENTS: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 2015. They are a worldwide call to end poverty, protect the planet, and promote peace and prosperity for everyone by 2030. The 17 SDGs are interconnected and seek to strengthen the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Malaysia is one of the countries committed to these global goals. In every situation, achieving the SDGs requires collaboration and resources from all parts of society, and youths are the part of the population that is most important in implementing the SDGs. To get young people involved in the planning and building of the country's sustainable development, it is important for different groups to work together. This article examines how partnerships can effectively help an organisation reach its goals and what the most important principles are when forming a partnership. In this paper, the Malaysian Youth SDG Summit will be used as a case study. The summit started with the support of 30 youth-based organisations and

was backed up by the Malaysian Civil Society Organisation—SDG Alliance and the All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia—SDG. The Malaysian Youth SDG Summit, which began as a one-day event, has evolved into a year-long effort to develop the capacity of young people to become SDG competent through the Youth SDG Agent initiative. The study provides information on how to leverage partnerships to expose youth to sustainable developments, drawing on the case from the youth SDG Summit and youth SDG agents. The strength of the partnership has made a big difference in the brand's credibility, its exposure in the media, its network, its support for hardware, and its human resources.

Keywords: Youth, SDGs, Summit, United Nations, partnership, SDG 17.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Youths are *“a resource of tremendous potential...who can contribute significantly to the overall development of the nation”* (National Youth Development Policy, 1997). They are in the spotlight for the world as it recovers from the pandemic, as they make up one-third of the world's population. Youth is the first generation that can end poverty and the last that can end climate change (UN, 2015).

Youth is defined by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) as being *“between the ages of 15 and 24.”* In Malaysia, young people who are between the ages of 15 and 30 are considered *“youth”* (Yunus & Landau, 2019). Increasing numbers of youth are involved in change-making initiatives, from volunteerism and activism to social entrepreneurship. Therefore, empowering youths, building their capacity, and providing a platform to showcase their efforts are vital to rebuilding the community.

Beginning in June 2021, the All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) and the Malaysia CSO-SDG Alliance have invested their efforts in reaching out to the younger generation by raising awareness about sustainable development goals and grooming them to be change agents. Spokespersons from the organisations represented this narrative at different platforms such as Sunway International School Career Week, Junior JCI online camp, Konvensyen Relawan Untuk Malaysia 2021, myCSO Transformation Day 2021, Higher Education Malaysia Association 2022 Student

Leader Camp - INVALT and the Digital Social.Com workshop series. The team also hosted the “Young Asian Voice” involving 80 young people from 16 countries; organised the “Youth Leadership in Post-Covid Sustainable Development Meeting,” which involved 25 youths from 10 countries in New York; and co-organised “The Role of Youth in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals” with KSI Strategic Institute for the Asia Pacific, which involved 40 young leaders from 31 organisations, as well as sponsored 55 micro-projects, costing between RM 20 to RM 40 thousand each in empowering youth across 30 constituencies in Malaysia. The initiative has directly reached out to thousands of local youngsters and youth delegates from more than 16 countries.

After gaining experience and building a strong network with youth-based organisations, the organisation has curated two signature programs, namely the Malaysian Youth SDG Summit and Youth SDG Agents tentatively beginning from the year 2021, to systematically engage and groom youths to be competent SDG changemakers. The essence of SDG 17, which is partnership for the goals that aims for the strengthening of the means of sustainable development via revitalisation of partnership is certainly a key to all the achievements in a restricted time frame.

This study analyses how APPGM-SDG and the Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance uses partnership as a strategy to leverage various resources and strengths to build up the Malaysian Youth SDG Summit.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Role of Youths in SDGs Implementations

There is consensus that youth participation is essential to achieving the SDGs by 2030, whether at the national, organisational, or societal level (Vambe, 2018). Few studies and official publications have also emphasized youth influence, responsibilities, and contributions for SDG awareness (Petkovi et al., 2018; UNICEF, n.d.; Vambe, 2018; Vijaywargia, 2017; Yahya, 2020). This indicates that the study of youth and their SDG roles is becoming increasingly prevalent. However, discussion on the SDG localisation process including youth and entities is currently limited, necessitating the need to conduct

additional empirical research. In Malaysia, for instance, few studies were conducted in the context of SDG localisation, such as those conducted by Khoo and Tan (2019), Rahman and Yusof (2020), and Yusof et al. (2022) focusing on SDGs localisations and involvements of various stakeholders in the developments of the same, where youths are a part in sustainability implementations.

In localising the SDGs, youth were regarded as the government's partner in implementing community-related projects relevant to sustainable development and to protect the environment (Vambe, 2018). In Petković et al. (2018), the role of the youth has been mentioned in supporting the sustainable development (and SDG localisation) by referring to Agenda 21 as the leading agenda in promoting the sustainable development at the local level. Moving to the SDG as the present sustainability commitments, it has presented 17 goals that are integrated, inseparable, and universal in that they provide complete system guidelines for governments, private sectors, and communities (Yahya, 2020). This focus on community is the essence of SDG localisation and needs to be steered and led by the youthbeing young sustainability leaders. Furthermore, youths have the potential to be the ones in charge of enacting long-term change (Yahya, 2020). However, it is most important to take note that the SDGs are focused more on participation and empowerment as compared to the previous sustainability agenda (Fennell et al., 2018). Hence, youth are considered the best group of stakeholders that need to be guided and authorised in materialising their sustainability actions towards the SDG localisation process.

Youth participation was deemed crucial for the advancement of the SDG. In practice, it depends on the extent to which the government has chosen to incorporate youth into the SDG governance system. This was evidenced by the SDG reports and documents that referenced the global agenda's advancement at the global levels. The following Table 1 presents several exemplary methods demonstrating how youths were integrated into the SDG framework in various nations. It demonstrates how youths were involved in executing the SDGs at the multi-governmental level, indicating their existence at the SDG localisation process. The following information was obtained from the Voluntary National Review (VNR) submitted and presented by respective countries to the UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) through the years of the actualisations of the SDG Agenda from 2015 onwards:

Table 1

Example of Youth Involvement in the SDG Implementation (As Reported in the Countries VNR)

Country	Youth Involvement in the SDG Implementation/ SDG Localisation Process (By referring to the SDG VNR)
Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth were contributing towards SDG VNR ● Youth were considered as the SDG Partner ● Danish Youth Associations assisting the government in campaigning for SDG at numerous educational systems ● Danish Youth Organisations has engaged with SDG at global and national platforms
New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth at universities were engaged at the National SDG Summits with other SDG Stakeholders
Papua New Guinea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The country commitments to engage the youth in SDG was affected by COVID-19
Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth were engaged with SDG through voluntary activities
Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth organisations support the SDG localization process through voluntary programmes and disseminate the SDG awareness ● Youth organisations were included in the VNR preparation
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth were selected as delegates at HLPF
Japan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth were among the parties engaged in VNR preparation
Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Swedish youth council were consulted in preparing the VNR. ● Youth representative for HLPF delegate
Czech Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth point of view were illustrated in each SDG progression

The Role of Partnership

The essentiality of partnership is seen throughout various disciplines in its narrative to make progress and developments in the matter advocated for (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine et al., 2018; Casey, 2007; Olson et al., 2011). In the context of partnerships for global goals, the curated partnerships are oriented

toward the alignment of ideologies and mechanisms to implement and advocate the SDGs. Nevertheless, the partnership typology that seems relevant in context to the engagement of youths in the SDGs from the local lens includes intergenerational partnerships, interorganisational partnerships, and public-private partnerships (De Pinho Campos et al., 2018; Alonso & Andrews, 2018; Cabral et al., 2019).

A study by Franzen et al. (2009) contributed to the importance and impact of or progress in partnerships such as intergenerational partnerships in the context of youths in the advocacy of peaceful communities, where findings showed guided program improvements and an increase in experiences. Similarly, in developing a critical social theory for youth empowerment, explored dimensions invoke a strong presence of partnership through their varied means to mobilise and encourage youths in community developments (Jennings et al., 2006). These were as follows: a) creating a safe environment; b) engaging in meaningful participation; c) engaging in critical reflection on interpersonal and socio-political processes; d) participating in socio-political processes to influence change; and e) integrating individual and community-level empowerment (Jennings et al., 2006).

In conceptualising partnerships, studies have also shown positive improvements that relate to individual, local, and global developments that coincide to create impact-oriented changes in various disciplines (Wang et al., 2017; Olson et al., 2011; Gandi & Wai, 2010). Blanchet-Cohen and Brunson (2014) explored the practices that were relevant in the engagement of youths in initiatives and programs, finding an intergenerational and multi-stakeholder partnership that engaged youths in these programs, individual-level practices that supported the capacities of youths to participate in the initiatives, and group-level practices that created an environment for social interactions and activities that actualised youth-led approaches. Moreover, an involvement of youths at the organisational level prompted youths to take on leadership roles in the initiatives (Blanchet-Cohen & Brunson, 2014; Schmid, 2021; To et al., 2020).

Partnership is extremely important when it comes to engaging youth in community development. This relates to the engagement of the multilayers of society in the efforts to localise the SDGs. The case study examines how APPGM-SDG and Malaysia CSO-SDG Alliance

empower youth through their multi-stakeholder partnership projects, namely the Malaysian Youth SDG Summit.

ABOUT APPGM-SDG AND MALAYSIA CSO-SDG ALLIANCE

The All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) is a bipartisan initiative driven to implement the SDGs in the parliamentary constituencies of Malaysia. The SDGs are implemented by analysing issues and solutions, conducting policy research, and facilitating multi-stakeholder partnerships, including raising awareness and building capacity at the local level. The team is made up of parliamentarians, academicians, solution providers, and civil society activists.

The Malaysia CSO-SDG Alliance has been active since October 2015 on SDG matters as a network of organisations involved in economic, social, and environmental development concerns. The Alliance has been working with the Economic Planning Unit (EPU), the centre of the SDGs since the beginning of the adoption of the UN SDG agenda. The Alliance is also a member of the National SDG Steering Committee established by EPU in 2016 and has actively participated in all national seminars, including providing input to the Malaysian VNR (2017 & 2021) and the National SDG Roadmap. The alliance members further participated as Malaysian delegates in the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development Goals 2022 (HLPF-SDG) and conducted the “Initial Reflections: SDGs and the 12th Malaysia Plan”.

The Malaysian Youth SDG Summit is an initiative by APPGM-SDG and the Malaysia CSO-SDG Alliance. This youth summit aims to provide a valuable platform to (a) find new ways to mobilise, empower, and inspire young people to take action towards the Global Goals by localising the SDGs and (b) enable young Malaysian SDG practitioners to meet with like-minded people and industry peers. Following the Youth SDG Summit, which necessitated the importance of youths engaging in the system of organisations in implementing the SDGs, the initiative followed up with the recruitment and engagement of interested youths throughout the Malaysian Parliamentary constituencies to activate, advocate for, and implement the SDGs in their represented constituencies via Youth SDG Agent Initiative.

THE MALAYSIAN YOUTH SDG SUMMIT

The chronological procession of the Malaysian Youth SDG Summit begins in November 2021 with the support of 30 youth-based organisations. The summit was co-organised with the Regional Centre for Expertise Greater Kuala Lumpur (RCE GKL). The UN Resident Coordinator in Malaysia, Brunei, and Singapore backed the project, and more than 900 young people from different countries signed up for the event. The Malaysian Youth SDG Summit 2022 was held on June 11 and 12, 2022, and was co-organised by the International Youth Centre (IYC) and RCEG KL. The following describes the summit's proceedings and youth involvement.

On the first day of Summit 2022, 13 youths aged between 11 to 30 were selected to present their SDG success stories on localising SDGs that cross-cutting social, economic, and environmental issues. They were chosen from 48 nominated projects by the 39 strategic partners. This event was seen by more than 1,000 participants online and was attended in person by 180 participants.

Inclusivity of various demographics was seen where delegates included students from secondary and high schools, mute and deaf youths (16), from East Malaysia (11), refugees, youth-based organisation leaders, and the public. Then Youth and Sports Minister YB Ahmad Faizal Azumu and the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Malaysia, Brunei, and Singapore, Ms Karima El Korri, attended the summit. The welcoming and closing remarks were delivered by Yang Berhormat (Honourable) Rohani, Chair of APPGM-SDG, and Prof Datuk Denison, Head of Secretariat, respectively.

The second day of the summit included a capacity-building workshop for strategic partners and speakers, as a joint effort with RCEG KL. 23 participants were given the opportunity to learn about SDG project management, which included “how to fundraise” (delivered by WWF), “national implementation of SDG” (by the Youth Council), and “SDG project monitoring and impact evaluation” (delivered by the Solution Project Officer of the Secretariat of APPGM-SDG). For the two days, 39 organisations collaborated as strategic partners to promote and recruit quality speakers and volunteers. Four national media outlets covered the summit, including TV1's Selamat Pagi Malaysia, Bernama, The New Strait Times, and The Sun Daily.

With the demand for SDG in Malaysia, the impact of the Summit was expanded with a one-year project, the Youth SDG Agent. A memorandum of understanding was signed by ten national youth-based organisations, including Majlis Belia Malaysia (MBM), Junior Chamber International Malaysia (JCIM), Alumni Parlimen Belia, Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM), International Youth Centre (IYC), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Malaysian Youth Diplomacy (MyDiplomacy), Selangor Youth Community (SAY), Higher Education Malaysia Association (HEYA), and Malaysian Indian Youth Council (MIYC). The initiative envisions the proactive role of vibrant Malaysian youths to act as change-makers in sustainable living and practice from local to global growth, with a mission to build capacities of young change-makers in implementing the SDGs through various means, including innovative ideas and projects initiated by the agents.

EFFECTIVE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS

Multi-stakeholder engagement based on SDG 17.16 is the greatest strength of the organisation, especially networking with civil society, government, academic universities, think tank groups, and the parliament. Engagement with stakeholders has an impact on the organisation's credibility, content curation, and information dissemination scope. Nevertheless, each partnership is well defined in the framework, enabling the parties to contribute effectively to the success of the initiative.

The summit was run by a single full-time employee with help from volunteers. This person was also in charge of other liaison, communication, and capacity-building tasks in the APPGM-SDG secretariat in addition to running the summit. Nonetheless, aspects of time and manpower are reflected as challenging factors in organising the summit. However, with a partnership model, the multi-faceted mission for youth development progresses successfully.

The Malaysian Youth SDG Summit curated two partnership models: (a) co-organisier and (b) strategic partner.

Co-organisier

The role of the co-organisier is to facilitate the whole process. The Regional Centre for Expertise Greater Kuala Lumpur (RCE GKL)

co-organised the 2021 Youth Summit, which was led by the Executive Director of the SDG Secretariat. With help from the spokesperson for a strong connection between other leaders of the Regional Centre of Excellence in Malaysia and around the world, the organising team was able to get in touch with the RCE affiliates such as RCE Penang, RCE Kuching, and RCEG Gombak; and gain the support of the United Nations University Office.

The Youth SDG Summit 2022 was co-organised with the International Youth Centre (IYC), an agency under the Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports (KBS), and a substance workshop was co-organised with RCEG KL.

IYC played a significant role in the accommodating reception from KBS, setting the tone for this event as a high-impact event in conjunction with National Youth Day (Hari Belia Negara). A discounted rate of 30% was provided by the co-organiser IYC for using their facilities in Cheras—the grant hall, hostel, meeting room, and PA system, with additional provisions for media and technical crew support. IYC, with the help of corporate communication at KBS, brought the summit to four main media platforms: TV1- Selamat Pagi Malaysia, Bernama, News Strait Times, and The Sun Daily. Besides also inviting the Minister of Youth and Sports Malaysia, YB Dato' Seri Ahmad Faizal bin Dato' Azumu, as the guest of honour.

In addition, in 2022, RCEG KL, the co-organisers of the Summit 2022 workshop series, contributed their expertise in curating the workshop content, recruiting trainers, and sponsoring the training venue. The workshop was successfully conducted at a minimal cost but with high quality by leveraging the network and resources that were provided including resources person from WWF and Malaysia Youth Council and the use of facilities.

Strategic Partnership

In light of the roles of strategic partners being to promote and recruit speakers, volunteers, and participants, the alliance and organising team for the said summit are open to all established youth-based organisations to apply as strategic partners. From a chronological point of view, the process starts when the representative fills out a Google form to show interest. Following the recruitment, an

orientation meeting with the potential strategic partners is scheduled to explain expectations for the partners after they join and provide a communication platform via a WhatsApp group to receive updates on matters related to initiative progress and publicity.

Strategic partners are the key to helping the summit recruit volunteers, potential speakers, and participants. Many of the strategic partners have a lot of influence in their own communities and have a lot of talented people working for them. These include organisations such as Majlis Belia Malaysia (MBM), Junior Chamber International Malaysia (JCIM), Higher Education Youth Malaysia (HEYA), Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM), Malaysian Indian Youth Council (MIYC), Malaysian Youth Diplomacy, and Universiti Malaya. With simple messages and notices from the country's leaders, the summit reached out to hundreds of thousands of potential audiences. Below is the list of strategic partners for the Malaysian Youth SDG Summit 2021 and 2022 (see Table 2).

Table 2

The Malaysian Youth SDG Summit Strategic Partners

2021		2022	
1	AdVirtus Collective	1	AdVirtus Collective
2	Alumni Parlimen Belia Malaysia	2	AIIESEC in UMS
3	Catalyst 2030 (Malaysia)	3	Alumni Parlimen Belia Malaysia
4	Chevening Alumni Malaysia (CAM)	4	Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM)
5	Enablerz Consulting & Solutions	5	Batu Lanchang Vocational College
6	EYP Asia	6	Boleh Space LLP
7	Fly Technology Agriculture Sdn Bhd	7	Borneo Komrad
8	Higher Education Malaysia Association (HEYA)	8	Champs Education
9	HOPE worldwide Malaysia	9	Community Transformation Initiative Berhad
10	I Culture Berhad	10	EYP Asia
11	Ignite Youth Foundation	11	Greenpeace Malaysia
12	JCI Entrepreneur	12	Higher Education Malaysia Association (HEYA)
13	Kiwanis Malaysia Academy	13	I Culture Berhad

(continued)

2021	2022
14 Life SOAR Resources Berhad	14 JCI Junior Penang Chinese Girls' High School
15 Majlis Belia OKU Malaysia	15 JCI Malaysia
16 Malaysia Olympians Association	16 Kumpulan Latihan Kelanasiswa Malaysia
17 Majlis Belia Malaysia	17 Lions Club of George Town Mutiara
18 Malaysian Youth Diplomacy	18 Majlis Belia Daerah Temerloh
19 Persatuan Aktivis Sahabat Alam (KUASA)	19 Majlis Belia Malaysia
20 Philandure Sdn Bhd	20 Majlis Belia Negeri Selangor Daerah Klang
21 Precious Pages Resources	21 Majlis Belia Orang Kurang Upaya Malaysia
22 Projek57	22 Malaysian Indian Youth Council (MIYC)
23 Students' Representative Council of Universiti Malaysia Sabah	23 Malaysian Youth Diplomacy
24 Sustainable Business Network Association Malaysia (SusTNET)	24 Penggerak Belia Selangor
25 The Malaysian Hub	25 Persatuan Dinamik dan Inovasi Malaysia
26 The Young SEAkors (TYS) Malaysia Chapter	26 Pertubuhan Pembangunan Wanita Tamarai Pulau Pinang
27 Universiti Malaya	27 Philandure
28 Youth Trust Foundation	28 Precious Pages ZResources
29 YWILD Malaysia	29 RCE Kuala Lumpur
30 企业家媒体 (The Entrepreneur)	30 Selangor Youth Community (SAY)
	31 Society for the Promotion of Human Rights Malaysia (PROHAM)
	32 Sustainable Business Network Association Malaysia (SustNET)
	33 Universiti Malaya
	34 Urbanice Malaysia
	35 Wiki Impact
	36 World Wide Fund for Nature
	37 Yayasan Usahawan Malaysia
	38 YMCA Johor
	39 Youth Hub

Seven High-Value Resources Gaining from Effective Multi-stakeholder Partnerships

Media Coverage

The 2022 Youth SDG Summit was covered by TV1, “Selamat Pagi Malaysia,” Bernama, News Strait Times, and The Sun Daily. In exposing youth to the frontiers of development, impactful collaborations to give them the stage for growth are of importance. This correlates with the construct of “influential power”; when empowering and mobilising youths, a factor of scrutiny is the recognition of the said group. Recognition of their work and a necessary platform for the community to see and acknowledge their initiatives and works are critical in the empowerment of youths in their journey as local champions. In essence, the media’s influential capacity in covering the topic of the summit and its related efforts encourages youths to find meaning in their work and services in localising the SDGs. The media coverage was contributed by the co-organizers of the 2022 summit, the International Youth Centre, with the support of a corporate communication team from KBS.

Local and International Attention

The Malaysian Youth SDG Summit gained significant attention from the national and international youth development community with the awareness raised by the ministry, the United Nations coordinator office, and the youth-based organisations. This was built on the credibility of the summit advisor, Prof. Datuk Denison Jayasooria, then head of the APPGM-SDG secretariat and advisor to the Malaysia CSO-SDG Alliance, as well as the co-organiser’s and strategic partners’ influence. In 2021, C4UN (Coalition for the UN We Need) and Ignite Youth Foundation (from Bangladesh) were international partners, and in 2022, Youth Hub joined from Bangladesh as international partners. This is a high-value resource because getting attention from around the world boosts the initiative’s credibility and helps people in the area get involved. This is shown by the fact that the right kind of partnership with global partners can create an environment where youth can participate and network with local and global partners.

Volunteers

132 youths under 30 years old in 2021 and 89 youths under 30 years old in 2022 were registered as volunteers for the virtual and hybrid

summits. Volunteerism is key to the success of this prestigious event. There is a diversified gathering of different youths from different backgrounds, representing their parent organisation cooperating to complete tasks, executing the summit plans through team-based action that included the technical team, ushering team, video editing team, publicity team, and the special task force. All strategic partners and co-organisers significantly contributed to this section, where the majority of the volunteers had not been connected to the organizer previously. Volunteerism is a key to the ideological identification of youths in their involvement in the developments of the SDGs, which are motivated by intrinsic values. Studies also showed that those who engaged in volunteerism were found to strengthen intrinsic work values and the anticipated importance of community involvement (Johnson et al., 1998), implying contextually that the platform of the summit provides youths with a credible, accountable, and effective venture to volunteer and gain experience, network, and build competence.

Speakers

With 58 applicants in 2021 and 48 applicants in 2022, the majority of the speakers represented at the summit were previously unknown to the organiser. The pool of potential speakers was dynamic. In this collaborative effort, speakers are the representatives of their organisations, initiatives, experiences, and lifestyles. The role of the speakers in the summit as aforementioned in the case, is such that youth representatives from various organisations and localities share their story of their works in the SDGs. In essence, when the community was given a platform to share their experiences of becoming changemakers and local SDG champions, youths found meaning to build their credibility and share their local works related to the SDGs. The organisation (i.e., APPGM-SDG and Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance) further built collaborative partnership proceeding the summit with the speakers and their represented organisations to mobilise the local youths in SDG related themes of advocacy, capacity building and awareness. Therefore, the dimension of partnership and its role in resource building goes deeper into the cohesion of self, organisation, and community, addressing topics of people, planet, prosperity, and connectors in the summit.

Content Curation

The content of the Malaysian Youth SDG Summit was co-curated with the co-organiser where RCEG KL played a key role in delivering

a quality panellist section in the 2021 Youth SDG Summit and 2022 Summit-workshop series. With the expertise and understanding of the youth sentiment of the spokesperson, an impactful framework was brought to suggestion. The impact and output as evaluated post-summit gives stakeholders a sense of encouragement in its increment of the quality of the summit from a one-man show to a collective intelligent effort. This further implies the importance that partnerships hold to the developments of community and nation; such that, in identifying common themes and synergising the common goals between individuals, organisations, and societies, content can be produced from varied perspectives and sentiments covering areas and themes not explored prior to the partnership.

Facilities

When a common goal or a project is worked upon with collaborative effort, it demonstrates that an effective partnership will bring to progress the development of the initiative with the reception of materials or facilities. In retrospect, the summit 2022 was hosted by International Youth Centre, with arrangements made for accommodation, recreation, and site preparation; while the partnership with AdVirtus Collective garnered the possibility for technical support for the onsite and online held summit. Therefore, extrinsic oriented partnership that can garner material support is pivotal in the actualisation of the summit and related efforts to enable organisers to cover and obtain material support and expertise from partners.

Target Audience

The summit is considered a prestigious event with the participation of various governmental, non-governmental, civil society, and international agencies. A significant aspect of sight includes the publicity of the event due to the nature of the event and, in turn, the nature of the event publicising the partner organisations and people that make it a success. An additional value that multi-stakeholder partnership brings to the narrative is the proximity of the dissemination of the information on the initiative to the targeted audience, namely Malaysian youths. In perspective, Majlis Belia Malaysia (MBM) as a prominent youth council in Malaysia has about 1 million youths in the network. Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM), Higher Education Youth Malaysia (HEYA), Malaysian Indian Youth Council (MIYC),

Universiti Malaya and Malaysian Youth Diplomacy and organisations with more than a thousand youth within the platform significantly contributed to the attendees of the summit.

Youth Exposure to Sustainable Developments

Through the *modus operandi* of the Malaysian Youth SDG Summit, and the key high-value resources garnered from the multi-stakeholder partnership, the youth of Malaysia is concurrently and adequately given the platform of personal, and professional development via the means of the advocacy and implementations of the sustainable development goals, of which the summit is a key platform in providing leverage for youths to be empowered and equipped with knowledge and skills in localising the SDGs. The right mechanism of youth integration into sustainable initiatives start with the right kind of partnership model that leverages on the strengths of each stakeholder to develop a foundational system.

The impact that the summit has garnered include the mechanistic involvement of youth as a follow-up from an empowerment platform to a localising initiative of the Youth SDG Agent initiative that was curated. The impact of the initiatives for youth development at APPGM-SDG for the involved youths include (1) deep impacts that cover personal development of individuals in relation to “B-Values” as proposed by Maslow, (1967) such as the value of justice, wholeness, aliveness, and truth. (2) Clear impacts that are directive on the skills development that is nourished through the initiative such as soft skills and hard skills that includes the example of content writing, and public speaking. (3) Wide impacts that contain in itself networking opportunities and collaborative prospects with local, national, and international talents and organisations. And (4) high impact that introduces the individual, group, and community to the sustainable development system and its workings for the localisations of the same.

Recommendations are drawn to bring the attention of stakeholders in creating value and impact-based partnership to integrate youths in sustainable developments in Malaysia. Providing a frame of vision to reach a sustainable model of partnership that aligns with the purpose and impact meant to be achieved through the initiatives. Therefore, to suggest the best modality in partnering for the SDGs, youth involvement in sustainability, and being focused as organisers in interacting with the collaborators.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the curation of initiatives that are oriented toward the SDGs for the cooperative involvement of youth in sustainable developments, organisations and initiatives require impactful and influential partnerships and collaborations for extending their reach and growing as an organisation, as seen in the case of the Malaysian Youth SDG Summit. Nonetheless, partnerships are ecological in nature, such that a mechanism to sustainable partnership is important in its aspects of creating changemaking and long-lasting impact. Congruently, partnership is viewed not just as a collaboration for an activity or initiative, rather an alliance for ideology, responsibility, and influence garnered through the activity. In the positive engagement of individuals, organisations, and the community at large to work toward a common goal, general developments of societies and nation, organisations can effectively encourage the participation and leadership of partners also through:

- a) Partnership to network. Creating a positive and supportive network is essential in today's increasingly interconnected world. It is important to foster relationships of trust and mutual understanding which can provide a platform for open dialogue and collaboration. Such networks can facilitate the sharing of resources, knowledge, and information; enabling individuals to benefit from the collective experience of those within their social circle. Developing such relationships can also help to create meaningful professional connections which may open up opportunities for interdisciplinary innovative projects. SDG summit provided youths and youth organisations who shared a common interest to connect and meaningfully identify potential partners for their future programs.
- b) Partnership to develop skills. Once a network and collaboration have been set up, stakeholders should have better strength, more ideas, resources, and capacity to build up the community's skills and empower youth in the area of focus through training and workshops. By partnering with different key stakeholders including environmental groups and policymakers, youth get the chance to learn about the principles and applications of sustainable development from different perspectives. This process enables the dissemination of knowledge about sustainable practices, thereby promoting the adoption of sustainable behaviours in young people.

- c) Partnership to engage youth in the system. Once positive ideologies are aligned, networks are garnered, and skills are developed, in chronological order, stakeholders and organisations encourage the collaboration and engagement of individuals and communities in the next level of organisational growth, and advocacy, which is, to engage in the system, to take leadership roles and to create their own key project and develop their areas of expertise.

Consequently, there is an input, process, and output that is invested into partnerships by the partners: there is (a) cognitive investment (input), (b) action orientation or behavioural expectation of partnership (process), and (c) sociological influence of partnership (output). It is recommended that when curating partnerships, organisations cultivate relationships that allow all stakeholders, regardless of their contribution, to see through the lens of the impact and objective that the initiative intends to achieve. The mechanism for leveraging a partnership coincides with the following:

- a) Cognitive/emotive investment: Both partnering organisations (i.e., organiser and partner) subsequently invest into the initiative emotionally and mentally by the orientation of passion, sentiments, and common ideology that drives the sustainability of the partnership. Thereof, invoking a need for the common ground to be built upon the established ideals that move the initiative.
- b) Action orientation and behaviour: Organisations are recommended to define the mechanism of work and responsibilities that are expected of the partners. Therefore, provides a clearer understanding of the roles and objectives of the partnership, whether it be for content curation, gathering audience, media coverage, material support, or volunteerism.
- c) Finally, is the communal influence that the partnership garners: Organisations are recommended to leverage the partnership in the local and global communities as such to strengthen the collaboration with partners by identifying strengths and weaknesses areas to further sustain the partnership in future programs and initiatives. Therefore, making it relevant to the local and cultural context that the partnership and initiative envisions.

The case shows the actualisation of the impact that multi-stakeholder partnerships can curate through their various means, garnering valuable

takeaways for individuals and organisations at the managerial level and providing a framework for sustaining partnerships. Nonetheless, it is recommended for researchers to further study the impact of the proposed partnership model and the values of partnership that have been accumulated to effectively involve youths in sustainable developments. The case study provides a reflection of the organisers as to how organisations can take stock and improve their mechanisms for curating partnerships and alliances with stakeholders in their respective disciplines.

REFLECTION

Leveraging each other's strengths is a powerful way to improve team performance because it lets members use their own skills to create results that are better than the sum of their parts. This approach allows for the accumulation of resources, knowledge, and experience across the group which can be applied in a collective manner to achieve higher-level objectives. Teams can make better use of their time and energy by combining their resources and expertise.

Goal 17 on partnership for sustainable development goals corroborates with the understanding that every orientation for action in the localisations of the SDG goals is critical to the sustenance and grounding of the roots of change taking place in society at large through the lens of the partnership between government and society (El-Jardali et al., 2018). The Malaysian Youth SDG Summit sparked the idea for this system and gave it a refined framework with clear roles that work with the structures of organisations, groups, or people that already exist. Reflection is given from the perspective of the summit organizers on partnership and how the summit translated the partnership mechanism into reality to get buy-in from different stakeholders, based on their interests, commitments, and impact.

There are at least three key elements to establishing an effective partnership. These are namely: a) identifying common interests and forming shared values; b) managing expectations; and c) celebrating collective glory.

Identifying Common Interests and Forming Shared Values

It is important to have a clear and useful vision as well as a plan for how to work together. Through this synergistic process, people can

build on each other's strengths and knowledge to make a bigger net benefit than any one person or group could make on their own.

The Malaysian Youth SDG Summit focuses on getting established youth-based organisations on board as strategic partners and co-organisers. "Established" means that an organisation has been in the youth development field for at least two years and has a certain amount of credibility. This could ensure building a common interest and healthy networking that can benefit one another.

The summit is a platform to empower the youth development industry in Malaysia. The mechanism not only uses the resources that each partner already has, but it also gives each partner a chance to meet new people and grow in a more complete way. On the day of the summit (June 11, 2022), the organiser set up a place where all strategic partners and speakers could meet and talk before the summit started.

Managing Expectations

It is important to communicate so that all who are involved have a clear understanding of what to expect and when to expect it while working in a team. As organisers, we always let partners and collaborators know what we expect of them ahead of time so they can decide if they want to continue the journey together with cohesion and grit. So, after the orientation and briefing, confirmation forms are sent to potential volunteers, speakers, and strategic partners so they know what is expected of them and have the option to drop out of the process if the requirements are hard to meet.

Collective glory

The Youth SDG Summit has created its own impact, and with all the parties that have been involved in making it a prestigious summit, it is a glory to the stakeholders. Acknowledgement, recognition, and genuine appreciation are all important in forming a better partnership and bringing together people who are interested in achieving common goals.

Therefore, as the structural framework is one that is accommodating and adaptable to changes interacting between multifaceted groups and individuals; since we are going from nothing to something, the sharing of glory with all stakeholders who have contributed to the

process is appropriate. Recognising and genuinely appreciating each other are important parts of building a partnership that keeps growing.

CONCLUSION

In exposing youth to sustainable developments, APPGM-SDG, and the Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance, through its youth development arm, show the importance of partnering to gain resources and create an impact locally and globally. The Malaysian Youth SDG Summit proved effective in creating relevant and effective multi-stakeholder partnerships and leveraging the partnerships to sustain impact. As the torchbearers of the future, youth play a key role in putting the SDGs into action, both locally and globally. Because of this, it is important to form dynamic partnerships to engage and use the strengths of each person and organisation to reach the goal.

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