CASE STUDY · SABAH, MALAYSIA

From Nature to Livelihood: Empowering Indigenous Communities Through Ecotourism and Cultural Heritage

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APPGM-SDG

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APPGM-SDG connects parliamentary leadership to community-driven development

The All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) advances the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Malaysia.

- Is a bipartisan parliamentary platform approved by the Dewan Rakyat that brings together Member of Parliament from both the government and opposition.
- Five SDG themes: social, economic, environmental, governance, and partnerships.
- PPMPL delivers programmes, research, and community initiatives on the ground.
- Supported by the Ministry of Finance and carried out in collaboration with Yayasan Hasanah.

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7 key approaches of APPGM-SDG to move from local issues to lasting grassroots action

These guiding principles anchor our commitment to effective SDG localisation at the groundlevel.

1

Mapping local issues

2

Micro SDG projects

3

Capacity building

4

District level policy solutions

5

Parliament-level policy advocacy

6

Partnerships and networks across levels

7

Sustainability and grassroots mobilisations



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Case Study: APPGM-SDG Intervention in Ecotourism and Cultural Heritage of Community

1
MAPPING LOCAL ISSUES

In 2023, APPGM-SDG conduct FGD in Ranau parliament and identified agriculture as the main income source and community-based tourism as a diversification path in Ulu Sugut community.

2
MICRO SDG PROJECTS

APPGM-SDG fund this community project that focusing 8 villages, supported through capacity-building and tourism product development.

3
CAPACITY BUILDING

Solution Providers (SPs) and beneficiaries strengthened in skills and project management.

4
DISTRICT-LEVEL POLICY SOLUTIONS

APPGM-SDG provided sewing machines to improve Lias product quality, expand market opportunities, and generate additional community income.

5
PARLIAMENTARY-LEVEL POLICY ADVOCACY

APPGM-SDG presented key issues from the 2023 Ulu Sugut FGD at the RTD to validate community needs and advocate for targeted solutions.

6
PARTNERSHIPS & NETWORKS ACROSS LEVELS

APPGM-SDG connects the Ulu Sugut community with key stakeholders and agencies, including the MP, STB, RATA, Ranau District Office, Borneo Strider, Pusat Kraftangan Sabah, and Yayasan Sabah, to strengthen tourism networks, improve local products, and expand market access and income opportunities.

7
SUSTAINABILITY & GRASSROOTS MOBILISATION

The Ulu Sugut community joined KOP. SDG to market and supply Lias products, expanding market access and generating additional income.

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Ulu Sugut is building a formal, inclusive, and growing local economy

Project period: 2023–Present, with ongoing monitoring by APPGM-SDG.

Total APPGM-SDG funding: RM122,970.
USTA was successfully registered.

- Eight villages are participating in the community-based tourism initiative.
- International tourists have begun visiting Ulu Sugut.
- Young people who had migrated to urban areas have started returning to participate in tourism activities.
- Youth participation supports intergenerational cultural preservation.

Lias products are creating visible income and market reach

RM26,749

- During five months of active operation, the community generated RM26,749 in income from the initiative.
- Lias products were presented as souvenirs to VIPs at the Malaysian Parliament.
- The products were featured at the Sabah Cultural Street Exhibition in Guizhou, China.











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Six lessons point to a sustainable community ecosystem

1 **Issue-based solutions:** identify community needs and address the specific nature of the challenges.

2 **Community ownership:** involve the community from the beginning to build trust and participation.

3 **Empower local champions:** develop leaders who can mobilise the community independently of external funders.

4 **Continuous monitoring:** funding alone is insufficient; ongoing guidance and support are essential.

5 **Strategic partnerships:** connect communities with stakeholders, agencies, and market players.

6 **Build a sustainable community ecosystem:** strengthen connections among members, leaders, businesses, cooperatives, and agencies.







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