



## Leaders of the future

### Youth camp empowers at-risk students

*By Krishna Rubi*

On 19<sup>th</sup> January 2025, the EWRF Manjung Centre organised the “Leaders of the Future” Youth Camp at Virgo Teluk Batik Resort, Lumut, Perak, gathering 107 secondary school students and 10 facilitators for a day of awareness, reflection, and personal growth. The camp focused on creating awareness about youth-related crimes such as gangsterism, vaping, drug use, and teenage pregnancy, particularly those identified as at-risk students. The programme also aimed to emphasise the importance of academic achievement, instil values and ethics, and build a long-term support system for these youths. Esteemed speakers, Prof. Madya Dr Mohammad Rahim Bin Kamaluddin from UKM and Tuan Anathurai Kalimuthu, a former prison commissioner, delivered impactful talks that highlighted the ease with which youth can fall into crime and the harsh realities of prison life. These eye-opening sessions created awareness and encouraged self-reflection among the participants.

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# EWRF spreads its wings to Sarawak

Empowering young learners through E4J

*By Prof Dr Soubakeavathi Rethinasamy*

This year, EWRF Hulu Selangor is proud to extend its impactful English for Juniors (E4J) programme to Sarawak, marking a significant milestone in our mission to empower young learners across Malaysia.

My journey with EWRF began in 2024, when Mr Muthamil Chelvam, President of EWRF Malaysia, visited Kuching on a work trip and shared the remarkable 46-year legacy of EWRF's community initiatives. As a family friend, I reconnected with Mrs. Subathirah, the Assistant Secretary of EWRF Hulu Selangor Branch and a former roommate during our undergraduate years at USM. We met over dinner in Bangsar, where she spoke passionately about the E4J programme—an initiative designed to support English learning among primary school children. As someone who strongly believes that “all children deserve quality education regardless of their background,” I immediately expressed my interest in bringing E4J to Sarawak. Shortly after, I was introduced to Dr Chitra through an online meeting. She elaborated on the programme's structure and goals, and from that moment, the wheels were set in motion.

I saw E4J not only as a means to uplift schoolchildren but also as a perfect opportunity for my students from the English for Global Communication (EGC) programme at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) to apply their theoretical knowledge in a meaningful, real-world setting—and to give back to the community. My students responded with a resounding and enthusiastic “yes.” We reached out to SK Dato Mohd Musa in Samarahan, a school where my team and I had previously conducted several successful programmes. The school's headmaster, Tuan Haji Issnu, and his deputy, Mr David Linang, along with their dedicated teachers, have always been strong advocates of collaborative learning initiatives. After discussing the proposal with the teaching staff, Mr David helped select 20 students each from Primary 4, 5, and 6 who would benefit most from E4J. With parental consent obtained, the school also arranged for teachers to be on duty every Saturday to ensure the students' safety. Mr David kindly provided the list of participating students and duty teachers for each session.





## EWRF spreads its wings to Sarawak

On 26 April 2025, my EGC students and I arrived early at SK Dato Mohd Musa. The duty teachers welcomed us and introduced us to the children, who greeted us with wide-eyed curiosity and excitement. Since then, my Saturdays have taken on new meaning. I now look forward to waking up early, eager to return to the school. Watching my EGC students lead fun, interactive, and meaningful activities fills me with immense pride. I step in occasionally to lend a helping hand, but the joy comes from seeing the children learning—picking up new words, forming sentences, and bravely trying to speak English while giggling at their own efforts.

During breaks, we share meals with the children in the canteen and engage them in simple English conversations—asking about their food, their day, or their weekend plans. Sometimes, my students seek tips from the teachers on managing lively classes—an adorable and insightful exchange of knowledge.

Saturdays have become extra special, and I couldn't be happier. I am deeply grateful to EWRF for funding this meaningful initiative and to the UNIMAS Sustainability Centre (USC) for supporting us with additional resources such as educational board games that make learning even more enjoyable and interactive for the children.

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Kicking off the programme with introductions and warm welcomes.



Elements of fun were incorporated to create an enjoyable learning experience.

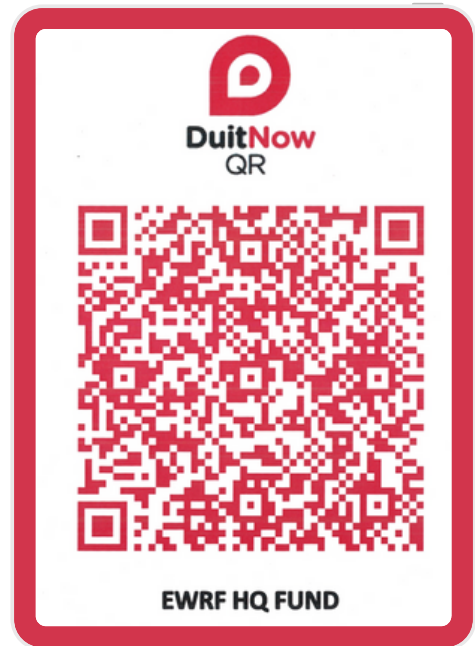
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