

LITERACY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP AND TRAINING FOR MARGINALISED CHILDREN

THE UNDOCUMENTED CHILDREN OF TAWAU, SABAH



Norazly Nordin, Noor Nadhirah Rosli, Afina Nazira Afizul, Nurrul Huwaina Ridzuan Lotfi, Ahmad Redza Ahmad Khairuddin, Norhamidah Yusof.

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MALAYSIA BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

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INTRODUCTION

This project is an initiative to cultivate a reading habit among the undocumented children in the area populated by undocumented families in Tawau. Children from such families are now being offered the opportunity to learn skills and reading through a school, aptly named Tawau Alternative School, Sabah. This project is carried out in collaboration between Malaysia Board on Books for Young People (MBBY) and Tawau Alternative School to instil the passion of reading among the marginalised children. Literacy and language enrichment activities that include reading, writing and singing were conducted during this project to further enhance their interest and passion in reading. Additionally, it also strives to equip the volunteers to conduct more reading activities for the children.



ABOUT THE PROJECT

This project is a community literacy project for undocumented children in Kampung Batu 4, Tawau, Sabah. This remote village is inhabited by people who do not have any national identity documents. The houses are built on water. The children in the village are unable to participate in the mainstream education because they do not have proper documents.

Kampung Batu 4 Pangkalan is a small water village in Tawau, Sabah (East Malaysia). It is directly situated on the coast of the Celebes Sea. Tawau, the third largest town in Sabah is strategically located as it shares borders with the Indonesian province of North Kalimantan and the Sulu islands of the Philippines. In addition, this coastline is surrounded by thousands of islands and islets that form part of the nation states of Phillipines, Indonesia and Brunei. Thus, it is one of the major transit point for both passengers and cargo traffic and an active migration path between Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia and Brunei. The porous borders of East Malaysia between these countries result in free flow of immigrants. This has stimulated undocumented entry into Malaysia using the East Malaysian coastline.

Often these undocumented children are associated with social problems such as gambling, vandalism and hanging out. This is because they have a lot of free time as they do not go to school. The undocumented children defined as and includes both Malaysian and non-Malaysian children. The common feature is the absence of birth certificates or other legal identity documents. They are children that may have been born in Malaysia or may have come from other countries at some point of their life (Out of School Children - Unicef - Ministry of Education Malaysia Report, 2019 p.8).

They are children excluded from the databases because of lack of documentation. They are the invisible children. Most of these children are illiterate but are very good with numerals as they are involved in illegal activities such as gambling and smuggling. If these children are uneducated, the chances are, when they grow older, they are likely to remain as unskilled workers with little opportunity of increasing their income, thus, perpetuating the cycle of poverty.

On that basis, a school known as the Alternative School was set up by a group of young people through an NGO named Borneo Comrades. A house which is donated has been turned into a school to provide basic exposure to the children the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. This project seeks to establish a reading space for the undocumented children in Kampung Batu 4 Pangkalan, Tawau, Sabah. At the moment there is no library there. It also aims to identify and train volunteers to carry out reading activities for the children. Besides, this project also aims to develop the reading and speaking skills of the children in that area, simultaneously enhancing their interest in reading.

Preliminary test was earlier conducted on the children there to assess their level of mastery of literacy and numeracy. The LINUS (Literacy and Numeracy Skills) test was conducted to about 50 children in the village. The Literacy and Numeracy Skills Test is the standard screening methodology that has been adopted by the Ministry of Education Malaysia. The results of the test found that they did not have problems with the numeracy skills but had problems with literacy skills. As a result, the school provided literacy exposure to 50 children aged 5 to 17 through reading modules developed by volunteers of the NGO.

In this regard, to further enhance the children's literacy mastery, this Alternative School Children's Reading Corner Project is proposed. The main purpose is to develop a children's library that offers appropriate books and other materials. It is hoped with the existence of this library, the interest to read can be nurtured among these undocumented children, simultaneously developing them to find reading interesting.

The funds raised will be used to purchase appropriate books and furniture for the library facilities. Besides, it would be utilised to promote reading activities among these children.





BACKGROUND

TAWAU ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

Tawau Alternative School was established in 2019 in Kampung Batu 4, Pangkalan Tawau for the undocumented children. The establishment of the school was upon the collaboration of Borneo KOMRAD, PERKALAS, Sekolah Jalanan Tawau (Kelas Ikat) and SALAM. This alternative school was established to provide free education for the undocumented children in the area. This school puts high emphasis on developing reading, writing and arithmetic (3M) skills including the mastery of essential living skills such as commerce, agriculture, sewing and cooking. Currently, the number of students in this school is 48 students ranging from 4 to 18 years old stateless students.







OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

- *To train the children how to read and write in Malay language.*
- *To build a reading corner at the school for the undocumented children.*
- *To provide training for the teachers and local volunteers to carry out reading activities with children.*



Compilation of Reading Material

The commencement of this project started with collection Malay language story books and general reading material to be donated to Tawau Alternative School. The book donation were contributed from many sectors which include governmental organizations (Kuala Lumpur Library), academic institution (UPM Publishers), the commercial sector, non-governmental organizations, and private individuals. The collected reading materials were first stationed at two collecting centers, University Selangor and MAIWP International University College (UCMI). Then, the team members sorted and selected the relevant and appropriate books to be donated to Tawau Alternative School in Sabah. The significant involvement by various stakeholders certainly highlights that the initiative was well received.







Reading and Singing Activities

There were two major activities conducted during the project were reading and singing. For the first activity, the children were given the autonomy to choose a story book from the books and later shared the stories to their friends. This activity intends to expose the children to book selection process and also enhance their communicative competence. We facilitated the process by assisting them to choose books that are suited to their interest and also define and explain numerous unfamiliar words. Next, the children were also given the opportunity to retell the stories to a larger audience. The second activity was singing local songs which cheered up the children in the school. Many local songs that include "Sayang Kinabalu", "Berita pada Kawan" and "Terima Kasih" were sung by the children accompanied with musical instruments orchestrated by the children themselves.





SUBUT BACAAN
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MAKSAM
YAMADA

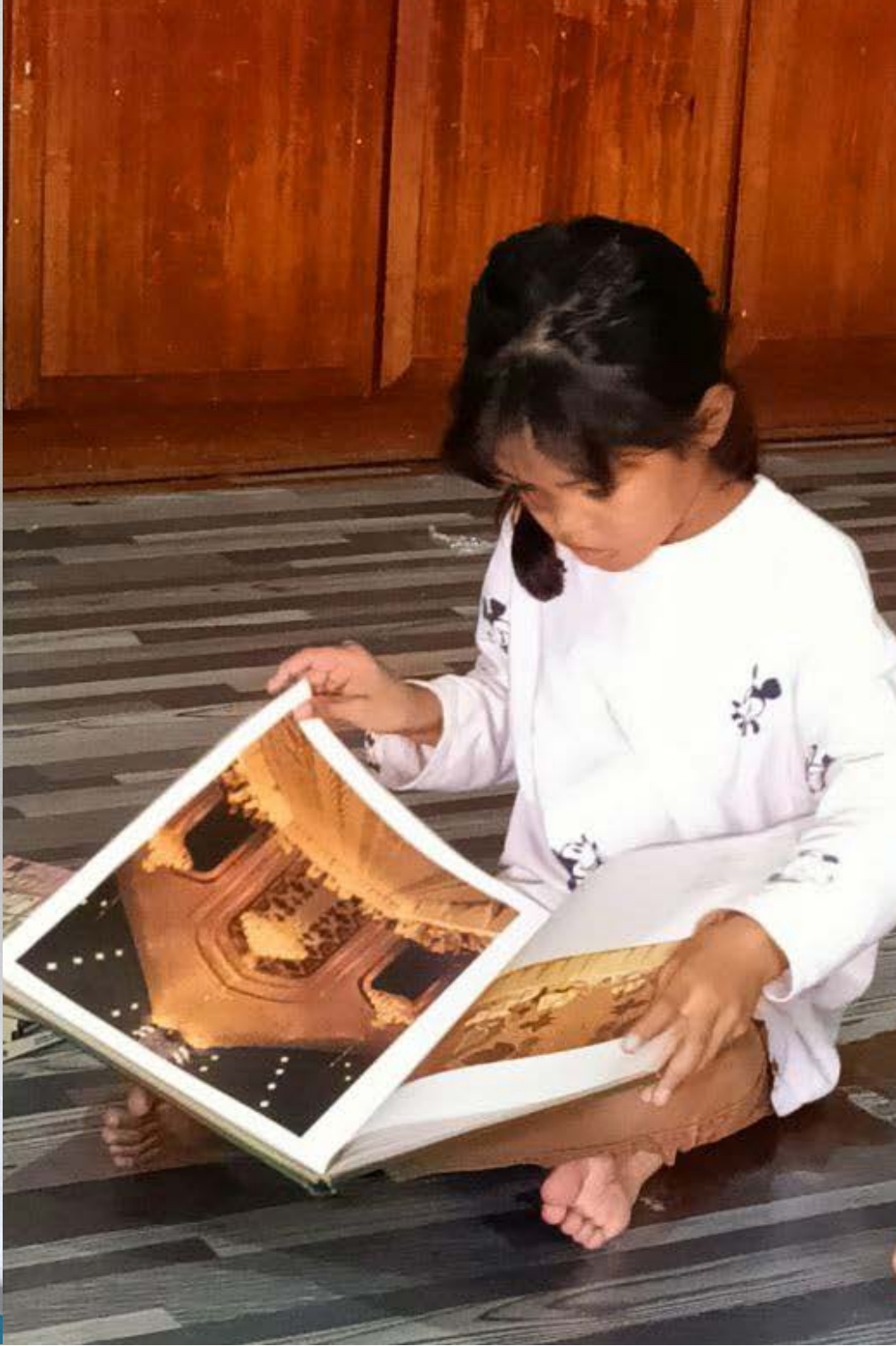


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berada di pulau. Dia ber-
perahu di pulau. Dia
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menyempurna be-

Ada satu hari seorang meranti kanan
berada di pulau. Dia ber-
perahu di pulau. Dia
menyempurna be-





Training of Reading Corner Administration

We also demonstrated to the children at the school on how to manage the reading corner and reading material provided to ensure that the corner is fully utilized. It is crucial to ensure that the books donated are monitored and organized systematically. The children were trained to catalogue the books based on genres which acts as a mini library system to the newly-developed mini library. Apart from cataloguing, the children were also briefed on how on to sort and classify the books and make records on borrowed and returned books. Several children were also appointed as the curators of the books. This is to instill the sense of ownership of the books donated. It is also hoped that the children and the community of the area would significantly benefit from this effort.



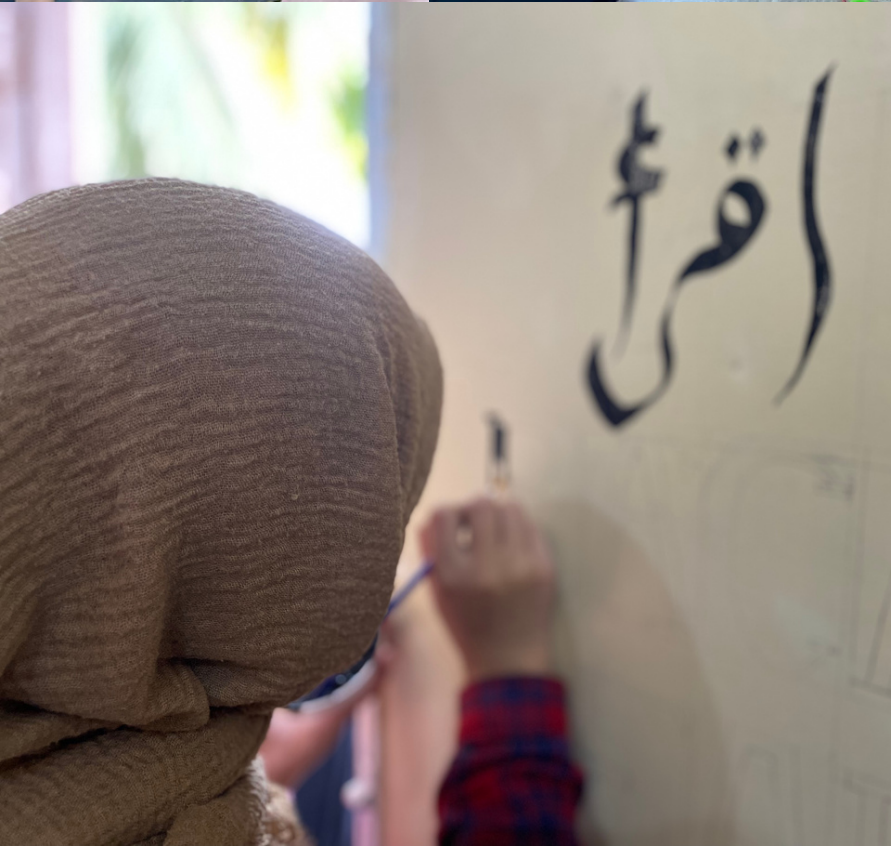


Development of Reading Corner– Communal Work

The development of the reading corner is the most significant aspect of this project. We intended to construct it with the involvement of the community that resides surrounding the Alternative School. The formation of the reading corner began with discussion between the teacher and the community that entailed measuring the area for the reading corner, and gathering the equipment needed. Next, three groups were assigned on three major tasks which are painting the whole room, drawing of mural and building the book shelves and it was completed within a day. We were also thrilled with the presence of the President of MBBY himself, Dato Ahmad Redza who joined us throughout the operation.











Conclusion

We are genuinely moved by the compassion and cooperation offered to us by the children, volunteers and the community during our four-day project. We are also honored by the kindness and the sincerity received from the parties involved. Accordingly, we also plan to revisit the place every six months to further monitor the progress made by the children. It is genuinely hoped that this initiative could foster the reading habit among the undocumented children so that they receive the education they deserve.





SUDUT BACAAN
MBBY-YAMADA
Proyek ini diinisiasi oleh MBBY pada tanggal 10 Mei 2018 dan
Meliputi (MBBY) di tiga wilayah yaitu Grand Park 1983, KALANDA
kota anak-anak sekolah menengah, Kampung Baru 6, KALANDA
**BACA BUKU
BUKA DUNIA**
DASAP AHMAD RIZKA AHMAD KHARISMA
Buku-buku dan alat-alat lainnya
KALANDA 1983

ILMUK MAGANAO
**KABIKSAAN
KARIYANAN**



**SUDUT BACAAN
MBBY-YAMADA**

Projek ini dijalankan oleh Majlis Buku Kanak-Kanak dan Remaja Malaysia (MBBY) di atas tajaan oleh Geran Projek IBBY-YAMADA untuk anak-anak Sekolah Alternatif, Kampung Batu 4, Tawau, Sabah

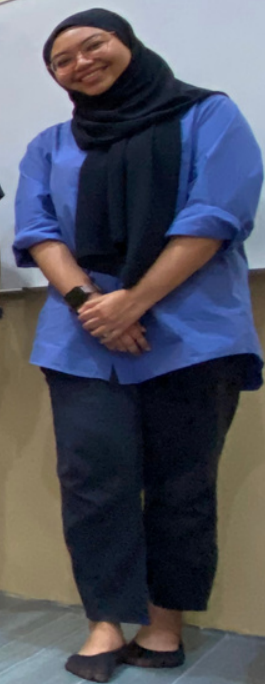
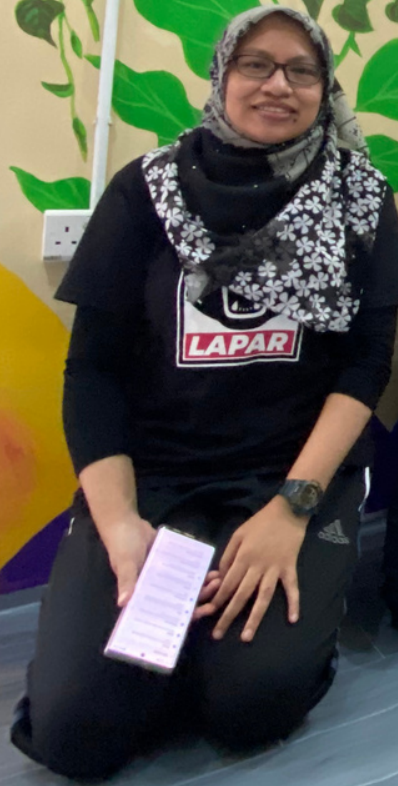
**BACA BUKU
BUKADUNIA**

Dunya

DATO' AHMAD REDZA AHMAD KHAIRODDIN
Presiden
Majlis Buku Kanak-Kanak & Remaja Malaysia
6 Julai 2022 | 8 Muharram 1444H



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BACA
READ



Acknowledgment

Immense gratitude to IBBY YAMADA Grant 2022 for the trust and fund to conduct this literacy project for the stateless children in Tawau Alternative School. Special thanks to Mr Azwan, the teacher of Tawau Alternative School for his warm welcome, guidance and assistance throughout this project. We are also extremely grateful for the contribution made by the children and the community in participating and developing the reading corner.



Team Members



Norazly Nordin comes from Tawau Sabah. Working as a lecturer in the field of early childhood education at MAIWP International University College. He obtained a Master of Education (Early Childhood Education) from Sultan Idris University of Education. Bachelor's degree and Diploma in Education from the University of Selangor. Now, he is one of the executive committee members of the Malaysia Board on Books for Young People (MBBY) He is also an activist in child development programs and involved in helping children who suffered trauma during the flood disaster in Garut, Indonesia, Shah Alam and Hulu Langat, Selangor Malaysia. Now, he is doing his PhD in the area of Early Childhood Education.

Team Members

Noor Nadhirah Rossli is a lecturer of Early Childhood Education, University College of MAIWP International (UCMI). She has been teaching in Higher Education Institutions since 2015 and has gone through many trainings and development in the education system. Obtained her Bachelor in Early Childhood Education from UNITAR International University back in 2014 and currently doing her Masters in Education (Educational Leadership and Management). Her area of expertise is in Children's Performing Arts such as art and craft, puppetry for young children, music and drama for children.



Team Members



Afina Nazira Afnizul is a lecturer at the English Language Department, Academy of Language Studies in UiTM Shah Alam. Prior to coming to UiTM Shah Alam, she was a lecturer in University Selangor (UNISEL). Afina received her B. Ed. (Hons) TESL from UiTM Shah Alam and her M.ED TESOL from University of Melbourne, Australia. Afina's teaching interest include Critical Academic Reading and Writing, Speech and Communication and literacy. She was actively involved in the curriculum review and development for English as a Second Language (ESL) during her previous service in UNISEL. Her primary research interest are translingualism, bilingualism and English Language Teaching (ELT).

Team Members

Nurrul Huwaina Ridzuan lotfi, was born on July 1, 1992 at Mentakab, Pahang Darul Makmur. She received her Diploma in Early Childhood Education at University Tun Abdul Razak (UNIRAZAK), Bachelor Degree Education (Early Childhood) (Hons) (Children Performing Arts) at UNITAR International University and Master in Early Childhood Education at University of Malaya. In 2016 she joined the higher education institution as a lecturer in Early Childhood Education. She is presently as a lecturer and assistant coordinator Bachelor Degree in ECE Department at University of Selangor. She also an educational fellow of Faculty Education, University Malaya and as an Early Childhood tutor at Open University Malaya. Her main research interests cover several aspects across curriculum, early childhood, innovation in education and indigenous people.



Team Members



Ahmad Redza Ahmad Khairuddin is a businessman whose main interest lies in publishing and the distribution of books. He has more than 15 years of experience in publishing, distribution and retailing, and his publishing house; Mahir Holdings Group and Cerdik Publications Sdn Bhd are currently the leading privately-owned publishing houses in Malaysia. He obtained a Diploma in Investment Analysis from the University Technology MARA (UiTM) Malaysia, a Bachelors of Business in Business Administration from RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia and a Masters of Business Administration from Ohio University, USA. Now, he is the President of Malaysia Board on Books for Young People (MBBY).

Team Members

Norhamidah Mohd Yusof hails from Seremban, Negeri Sembilan and is teaching in a high performance, fully-residential federal secondary school from the cluster of School of Excellence (Sekolah Menengah Agama Persekutuan, Labu). Her past professional experience includes a 16-year career at the tertiary level training pre-service teachers in the field of TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language). Now, she enjoys teaching English to eager teenage minds and coordinating literacy programmes as the acting Library and Media Coordinator at her current school. She graduated with a Master of Education (TESL) from University Malaya (UM), obtained her Bachelor's degree (TESL) from University Putra Malaysia (UPM) and is currently doing her PhD in the area of TESL.



Programme Montage



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