

## World Social Work Day 2017 – Malaysia Report

Prepared by Teoh Ai Hua, Malaysian Association of Social Workers

Several events were held in Malaysia to celebrate the World Social Work Day 2017.

On 17<sup>th</sup> March, social work students from 4 universities gathered at the Science University of Malaysia (USM) to kick-start the celebration of WSWD2017 with a symposium highlighting the role of social work students in advancing social work in Malaysia.

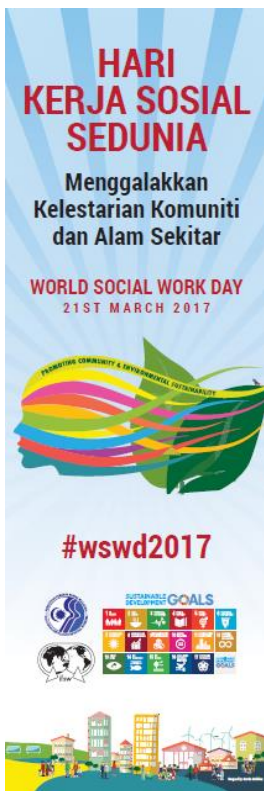


On 21<sup>st</sup> March, Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) celebrated its Social Work Program 20th anniversary in conjunction with World Social Work Day with a colourful event "A 1000 Steps Forward" with the lecturers and students toured the campus symbolised this year's theme 'Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability'.



On 25<sup>th</sup> March, the Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW) celebrated WSWD2017 by organizing a Public Forum with the theme "Social Work and Sustainable Development Goals" at the Methodist College Kuala Lumpur. Approximated 60 people made up social workers, social work students, and attended the Public Forum. The Forum started with a welcoming remark by Mr Teoh Ai Hua, President of MASW, who also moderated the session. The first speaker Dr Lin Mui Kiang presented the historical development of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its relations with the creation of the United Nations, the UN Charter and other relevant conventions. She highlighted Malaysia's achievements and shortfalls in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the current work of the government and Civil Society in planning the SDGs, and the need of inputs from the social work profession. The second speaker Datuk Dr Denison Jayasooria linked social work with the SDGs, highlighting the ideals and language of SDGs are consistent with the values and principles of social work. He highlighted the challenges and opportunities for social workers to step

up and play an important role in the implementation of SDGs. Mrs Jasmine Adaickalam shared her experiences working with the urban poor community with the audience. She highlighted the importance of social workers to be constantly on the ground staying connected with the community. She reminded the social workers to be aware of the complexity of issues faced by the urban poor and the need for multidimensional and sustainable approach in addressing urban poverty. Dr Mohd Suhaimi Mohamad shared his experience in his research and community outreach program with the indigenous community. He noted the needs for social workers to have deeper understanding the social, cultural and political aspect of the community when engaging them. He highlighted the close relationships of the community with the natural environment, and understand the underlying factors that contribute to resistant of change from the community.



On 29<sup>th</sup> March 2017, the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia celebrated World Social Work Day 2017 with its officers with a forum "Sustainable Community and the Role of Social Workers". The Director General of Social Welfare officiated the event. Mr Teoh Ai Hua, President of the Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW) was invited as panel speaker, along with its Executive Committee Member, Prof Dr Azlinda Azman, who is also Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences at Science University of Malaysia (USM). The other panellist is Madam Ruhaini Hj Zawawi, Director of Policy and International Relations of the Department and member of MASW.