Teach For Malaysia

First cohort, 2012

430 Alumni*

49 Fellows** currently in classrooms for their initial 2-year commitment



98%

of principals say that Teach For Malaysia Fellows have contributed to the overall improvement of their schools



50%

of 15-year-olds are unable to read at grade level

Teach For Malaysia

Developing entrepreneurial leadership for a thriving ecosystem

Teach For Malaysia was the first network partner in the South-East Asia region and the organization recently celebrated its tenth anniversary. Over these first ten years, Teach For Malaysia has placed almost 500 Fellows across 11 states in Malaysia and 75% of its alumni continue to actively contribute to supporting children in low-income communities in the broader education sector.

The Malaysian education system has long left the country's most marginalized children behind, with one in five students nationwide failing to complete secondary school and half of 15-year-olds unable to read at grade level. This was only exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic: Malaysia suffered one of the highest levels of learning loss in Asia.

The result of this educational underperformance is also being felt by employers, with Malaysian firms saying that only one in six of their incoming employees have the management and leadership skills they will need to thrive in their roles.

Shawn Stanly taught at a school attended by an all-Orang Asli indigenous population in the northern state of Perak with low student literacy levels and high dropout rates. Reflecting on his journey as a Fellow, Shawn shared: "When I first started, there were many negative



statements as to how indigenous children are not as competent as other children. However, the fellowship gave me many opportunities to bust this myth and to celebrate the growth of my kids."

Shawn created fun and interesting lesson plans to engage his students. As none of the students had ever experienced going on an airplane or even seen one up close, he led them to build an indoor flight simulator using materials they gathered from around their school and in the forest so they could experience flying an aircraft and visit places around the world. Recently, two of his students made water rockets with minimal supervision and, for the first time in the school's history, they competed in a district STEM competition. He was nominated in Wiki Impact's 100


RTANG UHP
OBJEKTIF PEMBELAJARAN:
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:
SUPERNOVA
① look for similes in the text
② explain meaning of words using clues
KRITERIA KEJAYAAN:
SUCCESS CRITERIA:
① look for similes
② understand the meaning of simile
Examples
as fast as ____
as slow as ____
as white as ____
Simile
compare two different things
John is as timid as a rabbit. He cannot do any public speaking
Steps
① Read the text
② Underline the simile by looking for ____as____.
④ the meaning
Simile
WORD OF THE DAY
ADMIRE

Changemakers in Malaysia under the Education for All category.

Stories like those of Shawn are typical of the impact that Teach For Malaysia Fellows have during their two-year commitment. In a 2022 survey of school principals where Teach For Malaysia places its Fellows, more than 98% said that they were satisfied with the work of the Fellows in their schools and that they have contributed to the overall improvement of the schools; and 88% said that the Fellows have had an impact on other teachers in their schools.



The impact Fellows are having is also backed up by independent research. According to the Malaysian Ministry of Education's evaluation of Teach For Malaysia's program, Fellows and teaching Alumni show greater strengths in four of the ministry's six Student Aspirations (Ethics, Thinking Skills, Knowledge, Dual Language Skills) than other Ministry of Education novice teachers. Similarly, an academic study found that Teach For Malaysia teachers scored higher than the national average of all teachers in eight out of ten dimensions of pedagogical practices, including developing a culture of learning, communicating with students, and student involvement.[1]

Melissa Tanya Gomes was a management consultant for five years at EY before she joined Teach For Malaysia in 2013. She taught at a high-needs school in Penang. For three years, she championed a national initiative that aimed to transform the pedagogical teaching of Malaysian teachers and school management towards building a culture of excellence in Malaysian public schools. This led to her receiving the Excellence Service Award from the Malaysian Ministry of Education in 2017.

Following her time in the Teach For Malaysia Fellowship, Melissa formed Edvolution Enterprise in 2018 with another alumna, Janice Chong, focusing on leadership development, teacher empowerment, and community engagement for schools and the government. Edvolution's flagship program, called Teacher Empowerment for School Transformation (TEST), enabled schools to reduce teacher absenteeism by 6% in five months and was shortlisted as one of the top 150 innovations in education by HundrEd Global. Melissa also received the 2020 Prestige 40 Under 40 Young Women Leaders Award.

Teach For Malaysia's 447 Alumni are active across all aspects of the education

> **"Teach For Malaysia has developed a pipeline of leaders who impact the classroom, community, and education ecosystem."**
>
> — **Dato' Kathleen Chew**, Programme Director, YTL Foundation

sector, as teachers, school principals, policymakers, and social entrepreneurs. For example, 2014 alumna Yue-Yi Hwa is currently the Senior Education Specialist at the What Works Hub for Global Education at the University of Oxford's Blavatnik School of Government, having been a Research Fellow on the RISE Programme, a comprehensive 10-year study of how to improve education systems in low- and middle-income countries.

Mildred Voon joined Teach For Malaysia's first cohort in 2012, after four years of working as an engineer with Shell. Following her Fellowship teaching English on a rural fishing island, she joined the Education Delivery Unit (PADU) in the national Ministry of Education. Mildred was then awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to the Harvard Kennedy School, where she gained a Master's in Public Policy. Upon graduation, she worked as a management consultant for government transformation projects in Malaysia and abroad. Mildred has since returned to her home state of Sarawak, where she is currently a division head in the Economic Planning Unit Sarawak, overseeing the state government's socio-economic development strategy for 2030.

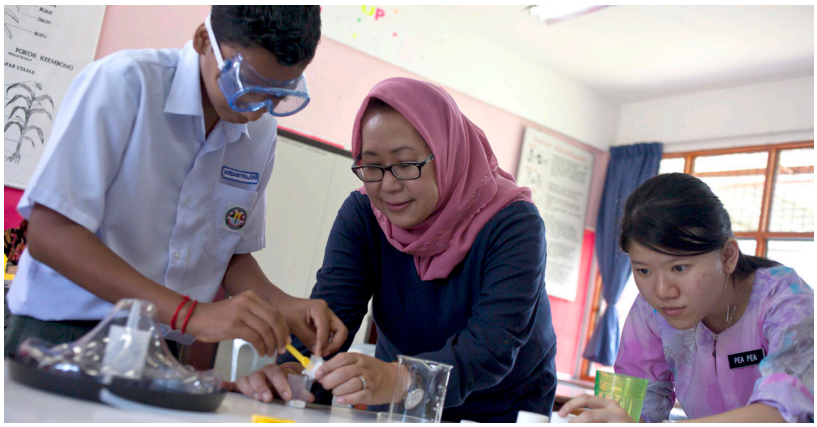
In the social enterprise space, Kelvin Tan, another alumnus from the first cohort, who was recognized as an Obama Asia-Pacific Leader in 2023, founded Project ID during his time as a Fellow. Over the



past 11 years, Project ID has grown into an organization that develops student leadership, social-emotional learning, and career readiness, with a team of ten staff implementing career and leadership programs for young people in underserved communities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, ProjectID collaborated with Teach For Malaysia to create soft-skill modules for distance learning in rural communities.

There are many other such examples of social innovation among the Alumni cohort, such as the four Alumni (Tay Sue Yen, Rachel Lim, Charis Ding, and Alex Lim) who founded MYReaders, which is currently led by Alumna Rachael Francis, to provide literacy programs in schools and communities to empower children to read. MYReaders has impacted more than 31,000 students through equipping students with literacy toolkits, training teachers and student mentors, and developing customized modules tailored to the needs of communities.

Arus Academy was founded by another four Alumni (Alina Amir, Daniel Russel, David Chak, and Felicia Yoon) to make learning relevant through multidisciplinary approaches. Apart from programs covering design thinking, project management, presentation, programming, and coding skills to train students to be critical thinkers and problem solvers, they also empowered teachers through workshops on global citizenship education, financial literacy, digital literacy, media literacy, and innovative teaching methods.



The impact Teach For Malaysia is having through the organizations founded by its Alumni is recognized by the Teach For Malaysia's supporters and industry partners. As Dato' Kathleen Chew, Programme Director at the YTL Foundation, puts it: "We first sought out Teach For Malaysia in 2012 as we were looking for strategic education initiatives to support. Over the last 10 years, we've seen how our support has enabled Teach For Malaysia to develop a pipeline of leaders who impact the classroom, community, and education ecosystem. We look forward to seeing how TFM will scale in the next 10 years."

Teach For Malaysia CEO Chan Soon Seng—himself an Alumnus of the inaugural cohort of the Fellowship program—looks ahead to Teach For Malaysia's next decade: "We launched our 2030 Strategy and Aspiration of building a movement of 30,000 leaders by 2030, driven by a shared commitment to our mission and vision. We are taking this big leap because of a deep belief in the transformative power in education, and the urgency of generating a critical mass of leadership