

WATER OF LIFE @ SERDANG

Location: Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Selangor

Applicant: Faculty of Environmental Studies Student Association, UPM

Project Period: March, 2017 – February, 2018

Objectives:

The project aims to educate and outreach UPM's residents and its surrounding communities about the importance of clean water bodies.

Achievements:

1. River/lake clean-up has become an on-going activity among students and residents in ensuring the rivers and lake are kept cleaned;
2. Water quality monitoring - water quality testing activities has led to identification of sources of river pollution which are oil and grease from nearby canteens and cafeterias; and
3. River rehabilitation activities such as tree planting and river bank rehabilitation are being conducted to beautify the rivers and lake.

Background:

Water of Life @ Serdang is a project conducted by student association from Faculty of Environmental Studies, UPM with an aim to increase awareness among university and surrounding residents in Serdang about the importance of clean and healthy rivers.

To achieve the goal of educating and raising awareness among students and local communities, many different kinds of activities are being conducted and organised. Campaigns, quizzes and competitions at schools, faculties, markets and places of worships are being organised to engage and educate the community through innovative ways. Besides that, river care and rehabilitation activities involving students and residents are being conducted to raise awareness and give hands-on experience about the importance of healthy river. The project involves water bodies around Serdang namely Sungai Kuyoh, Tasik Seri Serdang and Tasik FPAS.

Stakeholders:

- Residents of UPM and Serdang

Sharing Experience:

1. Engagement and relationship management

- In order to build and design capacity programme involving different backgrounds within a community, involvement and engagement among stakeholders are essential. Commitments from the stakeholders are key to planning a suitable and smooth-sailing river care activities. Equipped with students' knowledge on river care activities along with manpower and know-how of residents about the rivers and lake, this collaboration allows innovative capacity programmes on raising awareness and river care activities to be built.
- To carefully implement the project, relationship between students, residents and participants has to be synergised and properly managed to ensure minimised disruptions. Having proper documentation such as project proposals and progress reports help the students and communities to run the activities systematically.

2. Awareness and education

- Raising awareness and educating the residents around the area are essential in maintaining and conserving clean rivers and lake. It is not easy to sustain the commitment of the local communities. Thus, education and awareness allows residents to change their attitude towards rivers and lake which leads to easier maintenance and conservation.

3. Problem identification.

- Identifying the source of problems is the key to solutions. Capacity programmes can be built and designed based on the results of problem identification. In this project, water quality testing activities allow the source of river pollution to be revealed and planning of river conservation activities can be conducted to overcome the problem.