



SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



BRUNEI DARUSSALAM SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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My Action for SDGs

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FOREWORD

By the consent of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, Brunei Darussalam will be submitting the Second Voluntary National Review to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2023. This signals Brunei Darussalam's commitment to the SDG Agenda, through a timely and effective assessment of our collective efforts.

We hope to be able to collect success stories from all levels, be it individual actions, to demonstrate how the Sustainable Development Goals are localized in our national agenda. I would like to take this opportunity to call upon all stakeholders to come forward in sharing their experiences in contributing to the global sustainable agenda.

In our 2021 Annual Report, the Special National Coordinating Committee on Sustainable Development Goals reported on our efforts to strengthen the commitment to SDGs and to be more strategically unified to regain back the losses from the COVID-19 pandemic. As the nation transitions to an endemic era, new opportunities to reinforce the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals have begun to unfold, offering endless possibilities of whole-of-nation actions to achieve the 2030 Agenda and bring meaningful as well as better complementarities for the Wawasan Brunei 2035.

To tap into these opportunities, we continue our outward journey in parallel with the whole-of-nation process by engaging with various stakeholders including ministries and agencies, financial institutions, academia, and non-governmental organization as well as the United Nations agencies namely the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office (UNRCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). The ongoing engagement with stakeholders has inspired us, with more light on how our potential and existing collaboration can transform how we drive the nation's sustainable agenda. The partnership that we have built so far, both local and regional, is more important than ever as we entered the year 2023. Thus, I am positive of a better outlook in reaching the desired Sustainable Development Goals targets.

On this note, I am pleased to introduce The Brunei Darussalam Sustainable Development Goals Annual Report 2022. Not only, it highlights the continued efforts and contributions from multiple stakeholders in various goals, but it also shares the build-up stories for the Second Voluntary National Review. I hope such information inspired our nation to translate ideas into action and bring us closer to a more inclusive and sustainable ecosystem that we all desire.



Pengiran Hajah Siti Nirmala Pengiran Haji Mohammad
Permanent Secretary (Wawasan)
Chair of the Special National Coordinating Committee on
Sustainable Development Goals

INTRODUCTION

The High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) 2022, themed "Building Back Better from the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) While Advancing the Full Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" resonates with current national efforts to continue progressing the Sustainable Development Goals, amidst facing multiple crises.

Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic took centre stage in Brunei Darussalam's Annual Report 2021. As we entered the year 2022, the severity of the pandemic to social, economic, and health has lessened and is within control. With the National Vaccination Program and increasing population level immunity, there are now substantial reductions in the number of people experiencing severe disease and death. This has alleviated some of the strain on our healthcare systems due to COVID-19.

With comprehensive measures to reduce SARS-CoV-2 transmission and even though there are threats of the emergence of new variants, the outlook for combating the COVID-19 crisis gets more favorable than two years ago. Recovery is still an ongoing and critical agenda nationally and globally, the focus has slowly transitioned to building back better.

The world however now faces multiple, and overlapping crises from the lingering COVID-19 pandemic, the ongoing fragility and conflict, the worsening effects of climate change, and shocks from commodity price fluctuations that hampers food security. Much of this could escalate into many deteriorating trends and multiply the socio-economic challenges, threatening to undo decades of progress in sustainable development for vulnerable communities.

Building back better for Brunei Darussalam remains relevant to our journey toward Sustainable Development. We must continue to keep our compass right in changing direction in response to evolving conditions, prevent development setbacks, and maintain and strengthen the groundwork for a future that is more resilient, and more inclusive.

This report describes this journey and is divided into three parts. First, it will describe the nation's progress to recover and build back better within the five (5) focused Goals of HLPF 2022, namely Goal 4 Quality Education, Goal 5 Gender Equality, Goal 14 Life below water, Goal 15 Life on land, and Goal 17 Partnership for the Goals.

The second part provides an overview of the ongoing efforts of the Special National Coordination Committee on Sustainable Development Goals to ensure effective action and localisation of sustainable development in Brunei Darussalam as a way to build back better. There is also a special feature of the efforts made by a Non-Government Organisation, My Action SDGs to support the National SDG Agenda.

The final part of the report will highlight the continued commitment and efforts toward driving the 2030 Agenda and compelling actions ahead.

PROGRESS REVIEW OF FIVE GOALS

Overall, the sustainability and inclusivity efforts lessened the dire impacts of COVID-19 to Goal 4 (Quality Education), Goal 5 (Gender Equality), Goal 14 (Life below water), Goal 15 (Life on land), and Goal 17 (Partnership for the Goals) and unraveled more potential to make further progress in sustainable development.



Brunei Darussalam has long emphasized the importance of quality education to drive socio-economic development and foster social stability. Education is a lifeline for the children's future especially vulnerable children as it breaks the cycle of social exclusion by nurturing the next generation to become agents of change.

According to UNESCO, 1.5 billion students worldwide faced disruptions in the education system due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Brunei Darussalam was no exception to these disturbances. Immediate and transformative nationwide actions were critical to adapting the education system, shifting physical classroom based learning to a new and adaptive education digital model which saw online and remote learning.

With educational institutions forced to close, teachers had to transition quickly into an online mode of learning, which displaced and change methods of teaching drastically. Online education was seen to be more viable for learning continuity while adhering to the control measures introduced.

Teachers' and students' use of digital tools in online teachings such as MS Teams, Google Classroom, and Zoom helped to prevent a standstill in education and lessen the adverse impact of learning delays. Many commendable actions were carried out with the spirit of the whole-of-nation to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all is maintained, even when faced with challenges caused by the pandemic.

Access to Online Education

Pre-pandemic, all ministries, including the Ministry of Education, have been gearing up towards realizing the vision of a smart nation through digital transformation to further enhance Brunei's socioeconomic growth. The Ministry of Education worked closely with internet providers to ensure all schools have access to high-speed internet. School networks were upgraded to ensure reliable and seamless access to IT systems, digital resources, e-Government, and Internet services.



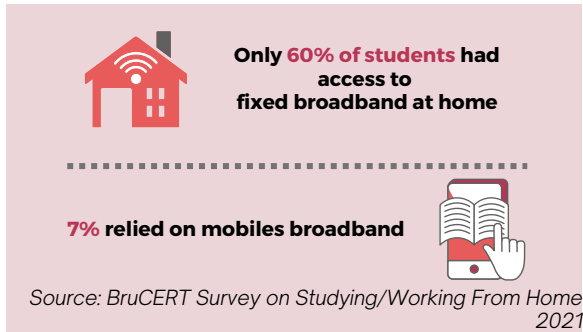
Source: Ministry of Education

To support these aspirations, a project was introduced to provide high-speed internet access to all Brunei schools. This project has completed Phase 1 where all primary schools have access to high-speed internet and has entered Phase 2 in the year 2022 which aims to provide high-speed internet access to all secondary schools. There are also efforts to bridge the digital divide, where remote schools located in Ulu Belait i.e. Sekolah Rendah Dian Sukang and Sekolah Rendah Melilas are provided with internet access through Satellite Internet. The digital infrastructure was a crucial enabler for the Ministry of Education to ensure no one is left behind in digital learning during the pandemic.



Source: <https://borneobulletin.com.bn/bridging-digital-divide-rural-belait/>

Digital learning during the pandemic, however, uncovered a more prominent issue of ensuring access to digital technology. While there was improved digital infrastructure, in which 98.9% of the population received mobile network coverage and its fixed broadband penetration has seen an increase with 88,123 subscribers (as of March 2022), a survey on studying/working from home 2021 by Brunei Computer Emergency Response Team (BruCERT) uncovered that not all students had access to a laptop (86%) and desktop (17%), whilst the rest relied on using their mobile phones and tablets to access online learning. In addition, 33% of the student respondents had to share their devices for online learning from home.



Realising this, the Brunei Community of private individuals and companies, led various initiatives to support the Ministry of Education's efforts with E-learning. One such example is that of Brunei's Telecommunication Industry where the Unified Nations Network (UNN) and the telecommunication service providers namely DST, Imagine, and Progresif played a part in supporting the Ministry of Education's efforts by providing a total of 15,000 units of laptops and 1,700 mobile devices for the recipients, in particular, those from underprivileged families.

Government agencies also work hand-in-hand to ensure accessibility of vulnerable groups to education is maintained. Under the *Infaq Tarbiah Khas* COVID-19 programme, the Brunei Islamic Religious Council (MUIB) and the Community Department Department (JAPEM) provided 297 students from Arabic and Religious Primary schools with necessary tools for online learning including laptops, tablets and sim cards.

In response to the second wave of COVID-19, the Ministry of Education collaborated with the Ministry of Transport and Info-communication and Authority Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam to implement the Devices Donation campaign to maintain continuous learning for students online learning. A total of 1,293 devices were distributed to students under this Campaign.



Source: <https://unn.com.bn/brunei-telecommunication-industry-supports-ministries-approach-to-e-learning-through-its-e-education-solution>

An e-Education solution that focuses on providing accessibility of learning tools for teachers to provide online classes, and students who come from socio-economically challenged families who struggle to attend their online classes, was introduced with the Ministry of Education in partnership with the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This would help to facilitate access to online content and classes, special provisions in the network are also allocated to provide specific traffic and e-Learning sources.

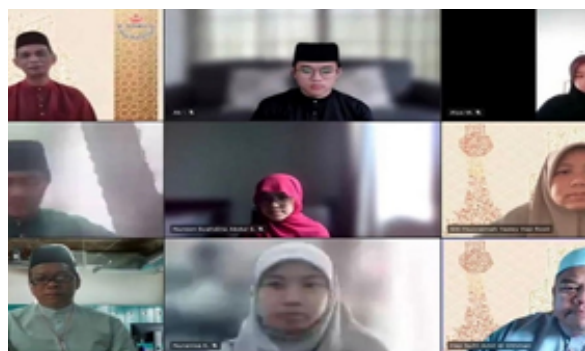
LEARNING & EXTRA ACTIVITIES STILL CONTINUED

As a country that upholds the 'Negara Zikir' philosophy, the Ministry of Religious Affairs continues to encourage the importance of reading Al-Quran amongst youths. This is reflected in the enrolment of youths in Skim Tilawah Al-Quran Remaja (STAR) for the 25th session 2022-2023 which was held virtually in 2022. This scheme aims to train and guide the youths with the potential to become National Qari and Qariah.

Maintaining Inclusivity for Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Children with disabilities and SEN receive support from specialised professionals through schools as well as the Ministry of Education (MoE) Special Education Department, the Ministry of Health's Child Development Centre and the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports' Pusat Bahagia. Families of children with disabilities may have found childcare, education, and rehabilitation challenging during COVID-19, as school closures and social distancing were implemented. Children with disabilities are also at-risk populations during the pandemic and might have experienced negative outcomes due to reduced quality of care and rehabilitation.

SEN students during the pandemic received close guidance and support from Special Education Needs teachers for their online learning. These teachers, trained in ICT skills and multi-media were able to apply their skill so that they can be more flexible in supporting the teaching and learning approach through a digital platform, and play the role of facilitator between the students and their subject teachers. Parents were also encouraged to actively involved in the learning process and be in constant communication on students' progress, welfare, and well-being.



Source: Ministry of Religious Affairs

Access to Quality Learning

Besides maintaining access to education during the pandemic, there is also a focus on ensuring high-quality teaching and learning. Initially, Home Learning Pack (HLP) was provided for those students who have limited access to online learning, but this was no longer continued, to reduce the potential contact and spread of the virus.

Home Learning Programmes were also broadcasted on national television (Radio Televisyen Brunei, 2020), to cater to the primary school students who are going to sit for the end of Primary School Assessment (*Penilaian Sekolah Rendah*, PSR).

The Islamic Studies Department, Ministry of Religious Affairs, and also Radio Televisyen Brunei also worked together to broadcast religious education for Year 6 of religious primary school students to prepare for the Religious Primary School Education Certificate (SSSRU) Examination.

Access to Quality Teaching: Supporting Teachers

The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Brunei Darussalam Teacher's Academy (BDTA) have transformed and adapted teachers' continuous professional development using online platforms including the Microsoft Teams, Microsoft Forms, Microsoft Stream, Yammer, and Canvas.

The integration of appropriate information technology and mobile devices in teachers' training may reach out to teachers nationwide more efficiently and effectively through webinars, chat groups, video meetings, online training, resources, and document sharing especially during the pandemic.

Although the first wave of the pandemic in Brunei Darussalam was quite brief, it indeed triggered the Brunei Darussalam Teacher Academy (BDTA) to develop and deliver professional development for teachers via an online platform, and later evolved into a blended learning approach. The online training developed has proven to be very useful and set teachers' professional development off well during the second wave of the pandemic. Albeit basic, in support of online teaching, the BDTA offers training on the basic use of Microsoft 365 for e-learning and these trainings are useful not only for teachers but also for other employees in the ministry, who support the teachers indirectly.

Educational Progression

As the pandemic progressed, educational progression was also a concern. The government had to ensure fair, valid, and equitable assessments for students to progress. The School Assessed Grades (SAG) assessments, replace the traditional written examinations for Brunei Cambridge GCE 'O', 'AS', 'A' Levels, and IGCSE session and were seen as fairer and more reflective of the student's performances. As an alternative to Primary School Assessment (PSR), School Assessed Mark (SAM) was implemented whereby students' marks were based on their overall School Based Assessments (SBA).

With school-assessed marks, a grade was assigned based on a portfolio of the student's work completed during the academic year. The portfolio contains two types of substantial work, such as assessments, tests, or exams using a complete set of past subject papers; a combination of questions taken from past exam papers according to PSR format; mock exam papers and topical test papers.

The selection of work included in a student's portfolio is at the discretion of the respective schools. The assessment will go through a quality assurance process to ensure that it is implemented fairly.

Mental Health & Well Being

A survey by BAHDigital found some challenges in digital learning such as, for instance, students facing difficulties staying focused during online classes.

Creative ways had to be identified to create positive attitudes towards online learning. In moving towards this direction, the Mindtrex Academy in partnership with Progresif released the first Game-based learning solution in Brunei named Mindtrex Academy. For now, it is catered to primary students and has already garnered over 6000 users since its released. Early findings indicate the app has been successful in helping students in the country with an improvement of 131% in performance. It demonstrates the importance of empowering children in self-learning through fun and interactive learning to unleash students' creativity.

Four hotlines are set-up to support school stakeholders during the pandemic school closure: Sejahtera Hotline to support school leaders and schoolteachers well-being related issue, 'Aafiah hotline for students' welfare and well-being related; Kalinga hotline for advice, consultation and motivation for learning as well as personal issues; and Syifa Hotline to provide counseling support for students from Arabic schools including their parents.

5 GENDER EQUALITY



Brunei Darussalam embraces inclusivity in our culture and unique society through, among others, equal economic participation and opportunities and empowering women and girls. The pandemic threatened, not just the public health system, but also the nation's effort to uphold an inclusive society. To undermine the looming consequences, the Government of Brunei employed a whole-of-nation approach to close gaps created by COVID-19, ensuring the continued protection of women.

Women's Meaningful Economic Participation

Increased participation of women in the global workforce has brought about with it many economic and social changes. The role and contribution of women to Brunei's economy and national development are becoming increasingly significant. With women making up half of Brunei's population, women are seen as a valuable source for the development of the economy and nation-building.

In 2021, women comprised over 40% of the total labor force in Brunei Darussalam. Women must be continuously empowered and supported in their participation in economic activities. Since 2016, the Ministry of Youth, Culture, and Sports implemented Employment Plan Program which assists welfare recipients, specifically women, to increase their employability through digital literacy courses and resume writing courses to find gainful employment. The program saw a steady increase of participants from 53 women in 2020 to 62 women in 2021. However, during the third wave of COVID-19 with rising cases, only 17 women participated in the year 2022.

International Women's Day

Every year on the 8th of March, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports plan events in conjunction with International Women's Day with the aim to provide a platform for women empowerment in Brunei Darussalam through the sharing of ideas and experiences. For 2021 and 2022, both events were held virtually strategically placing the women issue at the forefront of national priority in the face of global pandemic.



Source: Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport

There have been several efforts to empower women in economic activities. Youth Development Centre provides a variety of skills training courses which includes the Community Empowerment Program to welfare recipients including single and young mothers. The program was designed to provide training tailored to an individual's skills and interests in the cottage industry to help women in upgrading their employability and entrepreneurship skills. However, in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic caused the program to halt, creating a setback to national efforts for women's empowerment. The program resumed in 2021 with 18 women participating.

Stay-at-home mothers or housewives are provided with an assistance through the initiative Business from Home (BDR). This programme provides them with entrepreneurship opportunities including product marketing, and entrepreneurial guidance through collaboration with Darussalam Enterprise (DARe)'s flagship programs Institute Business Academy and Micro Business Bootcamp.

In 2020, a total of 39 women benefited from this project. Other government-funded programs such as Micro-grant for Empowerment and Special Underprivileged Mothers Empowerment Entrepreneurship Development were put in place ensuring that as a nation, 'Leave no one behind'. These projects were designed specifically for vulnerable groups such as low-income community groups and underprivileged mothers, providing them with grants, training, and economic opportunities to facilitate and sustain their development as competitive and resilient entrepreneurs and contributors to the economy. These programs enable women to be financially independent and empowered to be impactful contributors toward a sustainable and developed world.



Women’s Representation in Sports

Even during the pandemic, women’s participation in sports is prevalent. The inclusivity and empowerment of women and children in the sporting industry act as another base for peace and tolerance promotion. In August 2021, Brunei Darussalam participated in ASEAN-Japan Action in Sports – a workshop promoting Gender Equality in sports.

Women's participation in sports is further supported and encouraged. Her Royal Highness Princess Azemah Ni'matul Bolkihah binti Kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia Paduka Seri Baginda Sultan Haji Hassanah Bolkihah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah encouraged women and young girls who are interested in embarking on a career in sports to follow their passion and work hard as well as instilling a never-say-die attitude. The double Southeast Asian (SEA) Games bronze medallist participated as one of the panelists during the 'ASEAN We Score: Break Records, Make History!' hybrid talk show held virtually In December 2021 as Brunei Darussalam's ASEAN Women in Sports Ambassadors.



As part of empowerment engagement, Brunei representatives in December 2021, attended the Rising Talk Show on Women in Sports – a public awareness campaign to promote gender equality and women empowerment through the medium of sports. The increasing participation of women is encouraging, in 2017 there were 27% of total women participated in international and regional sports, and in 2019 this rose to 34%. Due to COVID 19 participation dropped to 26% in 2021. Participation of women in sports however continues to strengthen with 22% of national athletes in Brunei Darussalam being women.

Eliminating Violence Against Women and Children

Eliminating gender-based oppression and violence: The Community Development Department launched a Peer Support Group program in 2018 with the support from women advocacy groups, comprising of victims of domestic violence and single mothers. “Women’s Heart to Heart” builds women’s capacities to resist oppression and violence in the hands of male family members, making it a less invisible crime. The program has taken place a total of four times since its launched in 2018.

Utilisation of children and girls helpline (Talian A.N.A.K 121): Against the backdrop of a global pandemic in 2020, where countries all over the world were disrupted of their regular activities including efforts towards Agenda 2030, women and young girls continue to be vulnerable to gender-based violence and discrimination. Since its launch in October 2019, a dedicated helpline (Talian A.N.A.K 121) for children and the public to report on any cases related to children, including girls.

There is a significant increase in users of Talian A.N.A.K 121 during the pandemic showing an increase in the total number of calls received from 21% in 2020 and 52% by end of 2021. The challenge remains awareness-raising efforts to protect children and girls against violence.

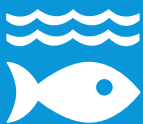
Regional Cooperation: To complement our domestic efforts, Brunei actively participates in ASEAN and other international bodies. Together with the ASEAN family, Brunei is following up on the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Elimination of Violence against Children in ASEAN a national consultation with relevant government agencies and NGOs. A Mid-Term review was launched, conducted by ASEAN Commission on The Promotion and Protection of The Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) through a partnership with UN Women, and support of the ASEAN Secretariat in 2021.

The report recommended for ASEAN member states develop international-standard laws and national action plans, as well as quality services for women and girls. The mid-term review highlighted the need to address capacity gaps in handling cases relating to gender-based violence which includes developing adequate guidelines for service providers in this related field. The importance of data collection and evidence which satisfies international standards has grown in significance as it is proven imperative in the development of effective legal frameworks to eliminate gender-based violence.

Prioritising Women's Development

The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports is currently conducting a study with the Centre for Strategic and Policy Studies (CSPS) as the national consultant on Women Development in Brunei Darussalam. The objectives of the study among others are to identify current and prevalent challenges as well as opportunities for women in Brunei Darussalam and to further their development, and to support the development of a National Plan of Action on Women under the National Council on Social Issues through the formulation of policies or program towards greater equity for women in Brunei Darussalam. The National Plan of Action on Women is expected to be ready in the year 2023.

14 LIFE BELOW WATER



Conservation of marine resources remains one of the core strategies in ensuring its sustainability for generations to come. Significant progress has been made despite COVID-19 measures in place that would potentially slow down the efforts to protect the planet's largest ecosystem.

Sustainable Management of Fish Life Cycles

Marine resources in Brunei Darussalam have been declining in recent years. Past analysis conducted by the Department of Fisheries has indicated a substantial decline in the demersal (bottom-dwelling) resource abundance in the coastal waters of the country due mainly to overfishing. The abundance of demersal fisheries resources in Brunei Darussalam has been shown to decline substantially to about 21% of virgin stock levels. The Department of Fisheries has implemented the Artificial Reef project as part of the initiative to enhance fisheries resources and improve the ecosystem – approach of fisheries management [EAFM].



*Deployment of bullet type artificial reefs in zone 2 & 3 provides refuge for marine organisms which overtime establish the ecosystem and other necessary elements for biodiversity and a productive ocean.
Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism*

Artificial reef structures in the marine environment are a response to abate this fisheries resource depletion. Artificial reef refers to any submerged structure deliberately constructed or placed on the seabed to emulate some functions of a natural reef such as protecting, regenerating, concentrating, and/or enhancing populations of living marine resources. Despite the significant disruption to the supply chain in the year 2021, the Department of Fisheries deployed 248 units of artificial reefs in zone 2 (3.1-20 nm seaward) and zone 3 (20.1-45 nm) of Brunei Darussalam Fishery Limits.


Undeterred Enforcement of Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing

Since 2011, the Brunei Darussalam National Action Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing (NPOA-IUU) provides a strong framework to effectively enhance and strengthen the overall level of fisheries management in Brunei's waters; sustain fisheries resources and the marine environment; and (optimize the benefit of adopting responsible fishing practices).


Licensing and Enforcement Division which was established within the Department of Fisheries has ensured the prevention of overexploitation of fisheries resources specifically from poaching and illegal forms of fishing, and other IUU fishing activities, through the acquisition of additional patrol boats, additional manpower, and law enforcement personnel, which is per NPOA-IUU of Brunei Darussalam.

To date, the Department of Fisheries is actively conducting surveillance and enforcement operations: Operasi Kembura; Operasi Menangan; and Joint Operation with various government enforcement agencies, and through the coordination by the National Maritime Coordinating Centre (NMCC) under Prime Minister's Office.

During the pandemic, a shortage of patrol officers was inevitable due to the surge of COVID cases and exposures. In response to such a crisis, the Department of Fisheries reviewed staffing plans and ensure all staff complied with General Advisory for Workplace in Response to COVID-19, issued by the Ministry of Health.



Patrol operations rose to 340 in 2021
from 242 in 2020



No foreign fishing vessels was detained in 2021
as compared to a total of 3 foreign fishing vessels detained in the previous year

Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

The success of adaptive enforcement operations during the pandemic continues to be the key in protecting and sustaining marine resources in Brunei Darussalam.


Sustainable Ocean Alliance (SOA) Hub in Brunei Darussalam
activates young people, develops and implements innovative solutions, and mobilizes resources to restore the health of the ocean.

Projects contributing to Goal 14:

- River Clean-Up Operation** in Kampong Ayer
- Advocasea Camp**, where youth participate to learn project management, finance management and public speaking



Source: Sustainable Ocean Alliance



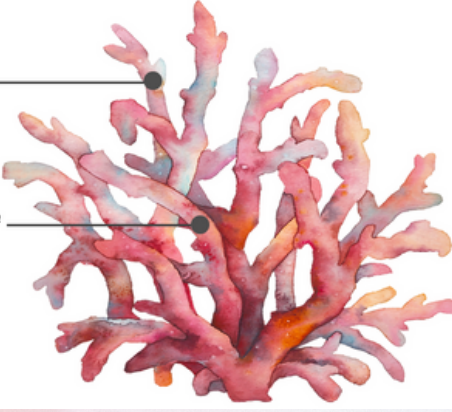
PROTECTING NATURE THROUGH EDUCATION & ACTION

BruWILD's Save Our Ocean project

The project explores various ways to address marine related issues such as mitigating marine debris problems, sea turtle conservation, combating climate change, plastic waste pollution, etc. So far, they have achieved it through educational campaigns and collaborative projects with local NGOs, government institutions and private sectors.

Tiny Heroes of Our Sea
Micro documentary by BruWILD

Beat Plastic pollution
#indamauplastik



Source: <https://www.bruwild.org/>

15 LIFE ON LAND



Seven (7) main forest types namely Mixed Dipterocarp Forest (MDF), Peat Swamp Forest, Freshwater Swamp Forest, Mangrove Forest, Heath (Kerangas) Forest, Montane Forest, and Beach Forest make up 72% of the total land area. The government is actively working to extend the areas gazetted as forest reserves to 55% of the total land area, which currently stands at 41%.

Robust legislation and policies have been essential for the protection and conservation of forest ecosystems as well as the preservation of forest cover. To balance with economic activity purposes, the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism (MPRT) through the Forestry Department continues to implement the Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) to ensure a continuous supply of resources for the timber industry of the country and the benefits of our future generations. The main legal instrument to protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of forest resources, is the Forest Act, Chapter 46, Laws of Brunei (Amended 2019). Other relevant legislations include Wildlife Protection Act; Land Code and Land Acquisition Act; Antiquities and Treasure Trove Act; Town and Country Planning Act; and Wild Fauna and Flora Order 2007.

The national duty to protect, conserve and preserve the forest continues and never faltered during the pandemic.



Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

Tree Planting & Reforestation

Despite the COVID-19 control measures, several events such as tree planting and reforestation continued. One example is an event hosted by the Brunei Climate Change Secretariat (BCCS) with the cooperation of the Jabatan Alam Sekitar, Taman & Rekreasi (JASTRE) to mark the officiation of Brunei Darussalam's Protokol Hijau (Green Protocol) in conjunction with the Year of Climate Action. A total of 13 Ministers, 2 Deputies and other invited guests gathered at the Kg Sg Besar base of Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien Bridge to plant a total of 68 trees to restore greenery to the area that was once a construction site.



Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism



A total of 36,697 trees
have been planted up to
December 2021



Approximately 30.5 hectares
of degraded lands
within forest reserves and
logged-over forests have been
reforested and restored
in 2021

Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

Overall, even though the achievement fell short of 10,803 trees as targeted for tree planting and insignificant size of reforestation of degraded land in comparison to the year 2021 which was approximately 286 hectares, it was a big accomplishment during a tough time.

In line with the Brunei Darussalam National Climate Change Policy (BNCCP), particularly Strategy 2 (Forest Cover) of increasing Brunei Darussalam's carbon sink through afforestation and reforestation programmes, tree planting and reforestation efforts are expected to pick up their momentum to meet the target of planting 500,000 new trees by 2035.

International Day of Forests 2022



Brunei Darussalam celebrated **the International Day of Forests** every year to raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests for the benefit of current and future generations.

On the 21st March 2022, **a total of 213 tree saplings** were planted to mark the International Day of Forests in an event organised by the Forestry Department, Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, at Andulau Forest Reserve

In conjunction with the International Day of Forests 2022, the Forestry Department, Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism conducted a **webinar with the theme 'Forests and Sustainable Production and Consumption'**. The main objective of this Webinar is to bring together governments, private sectors, and leading practitioners from non-government organizations to build a shared narrative and goals for all forests for a better future based on sustainable production and consumption of forests.

Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

BruWILD's Eco-Edu Program

The program aims to engage students in environmental related topics and provide opportunities to put conservation principles into action and use.

These Eco-Edu Packages include complete visual presentation by our speakers, guided nature trips and group activities (indoor and outdoor).

As has been proven in many different settings, students can benefit substantially from these materials to create a better understanding of the topic and raising the awareness of the country's bio asset and natural heritage.

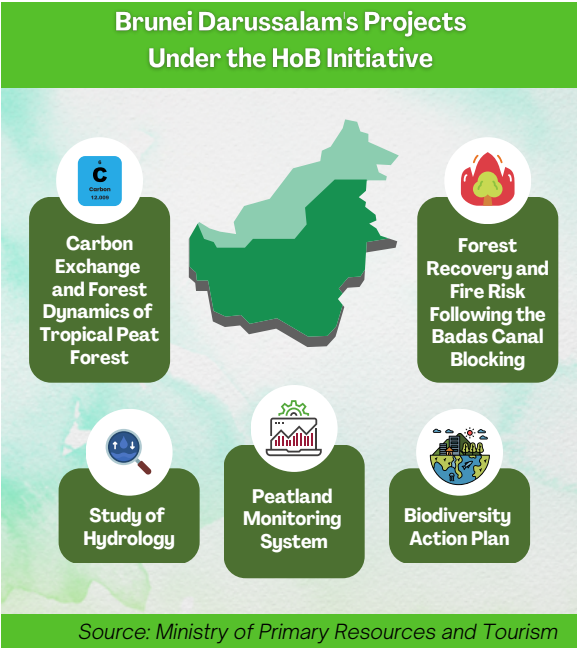


Source: <https://www.bruwild.org/>

Heart of Borneo Initiative

In recognition of the immense benefits that a large-scale, landscape-level conservation initiative would bring to the people of Borneo, Brunei Darussalam is committed to the voluntary agreement known as the Heart of Borneo Initiative (HoB). HoB aims at conserving biodiversity through effective management of forest and land resources and establishing networks of protected forest areas and other sustainable land uses. Through the HoB Initiative, developments are ensured to be implemented following the principle of sustainable development.

Brunei Darussalam has allocated about 58% of its total land area (consisting of areas under forest reserve, state land forest, settlement areas, agricultural land, etc.) for the HoB Initiative. The Brunei Darussalam HoB Project Implementation Framework (PIF) sets out the overall planning, strategies, and frameworks for the implementation of the HoB Initiative, including proposed scientific research activities on the country’s biodiversity to understand how they function and their significance, thus leading to their sustainable utilisation, conservation, and management.



Sustainably managing key areas such as the Peat Swamp Forest (PSF) has always been a priority for Brunei Darussalam. There is a need first to understand how PSF function and their significance in maintaining environmental stability before measures and plan can be developed to sustainably manage them including restoring and rehabilitating them. Due to the pandemic, the fieldwork to conduct scientific research was postponed and it is expected to resume in the year 2023.

Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)

With the current global environmental issues brought about by climate change and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic battles, The Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism is now developing new ways of looking at economic strategies and approaches need through Nature-based Solutions (NbS). NbS have been gaining recent attention as an effective solution to address important global challenges such as climate change, human health, food and water security, natural disasters, and biodiversity loss. It is seen as part of the remaining resilient in facing future challenges, especially in the areas of food security, health and economic growth in general, and the environment. Thus, sustaining these resources is paramount for the present and future generations.

Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) also plays a very important role, in particular in balancing the socio-economic and environmental relevance of forests, and has been an integral part of policy direction and prescriptive for global authorities in forestry, including Brunei Darussalam. MPRT through the Forest Department has been implementing the SFM in order to provide unified benefits to us all including sustaining the economy, protecting biodiversity, improving ecosystem services such as water quality, air quality, or soil productivity; and mitigating some of the effects of climate change. Green Economy helps to further strengthen Brunei’s endeavours in achieving sustainability and growth and can be integrated accordingly with the existing SFM.

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Brunei Darussalam recognises the necessity for intensified commitment to global partnership and collaboration through a whole of nation approach to find long-term solutions towards achieving the SDGs amidst the multitude of challenges the world is currently facing. To build back better from the pandemic, a full-scale transformation will be required.

Development assistance heightened, largely due to COVID-related aid

Given the ongoing nature of the pandemic and the stark differences in vaccine distribution between different nations, Brunei Darussalam has aided both in the form of financial and in-kind on an ad hoc basis, such as contributions to COVID-19 relief funds and vaccines to countries like Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, and China.

In the spirit of assisting other nations in their development journey, Brunei Darussalam continues to provide financial and technical assistance to other countries through international organisations, including programmes such as UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC).

Financing for development improved

As means to improve domestic capacity for revenue collection as well as to strengthen domestic resource mobilization, the One Common Billing System (OCBS) was introduced which functions as a common platform to facilitate the public to make online payments. It also assists departments that do not have a billing system to collect revenue and reduce arrears revenue. Since its inception in 2020, a total of eight (8) Government agencies – Housing Development Department, Department of Agriculture and Agrifood, Treasury Department, Department of Economic, Planning, and Statistics, Sales and Revenue unit (State Store) under Treasury Department, Town and Country Planning Department, Ministry of Development and Ministry of Defence – have been on-boarded while four (4) more agencies are expected to complete their onboarding process by the end of 2022.

Another initiative to facilitate the business community is the One Common Portal. This system is an initiative by the Ministry of Finance and Economy to provide the business community with a single platform to manage their business obligations online – from business registration and company incorporation to managing their tax obligations, filing annual returns as well as paying charges for registering a business.

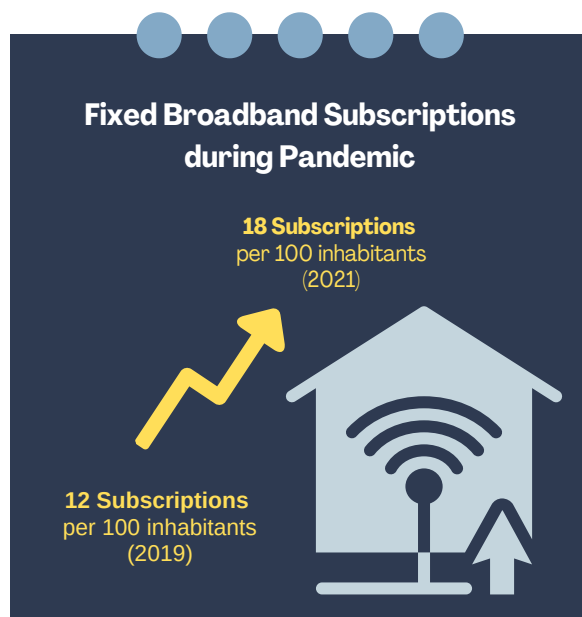


One Common Portal (OCP) Website
Source: <https://www.ocp.mofe.gov.bn>

Brunei Darussalam also encourages and promotes effective public-private partnerships (PPP), particularly in infrastructure projects, through the Fiscal Consolidation Programme (FCP). The programme is aimed at minimising government costs in the provision of quality public infrastructure, goods, and services; improving the productivity, efficiency, and quality of the said goods and services; and increasing the performance of priority economic sectors. Such projects include the corporatisation of the Government Rice Mill under the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism as part of ensuring food security in Brunei Darussalam.

Surged in Internet usage

Based on the 2019 ICT Survey for Individuals, Households, and Businesses, 95% of the respondents used the internet daily in 2018. Since the emergence of COVID-19, the internet has become essential for working, learning, getting basic services, and staying in touch.



Significance of data and statistics for sound decision-making

High-quality data have proven crucial in guiding decision-making for development, notably during the pandemic. To this end, several initiatives were implemented to better monitor the progress of the SDGs.

The National Data Coordination Steering Committee was established in 2020 as a platform to collaborate toward strengthening socio-economic data by strengthening the role of data source agencies in efforts to reduce data gaps. Under this committee, a total of six working committees each headed by Permanent Secretaries have been established, namely Tourism, Finance, Industry, Housing and Environment, Gender Equality and Disability, and Digital Economy.

Economic Relief Packages for MSMEs and Individuals

To support business stability during the pandemic, the Ministry of Finance and Economy (MoFE) on behalf of the Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD) and Brunei Association of Banks (BAB) announced additional steps to the interim measures taken by the Brunei Government in aiding various micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and individuals affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The steps include an additional economic relief package introduced on 1 April 2020, in total amounting to approximately BND250 million in the form of deferment of principal or loan repayment and waivers of fees and charges. This measure, combined with previously announced fiscal assistance - such as deferment of the Employees Trust Fund (TAP) and Supplemental Contributory Pension (SCP) contributions and increasing the capacity of workers - including business productivity, increased the value of the economic stimulus package for Brunei Darussalam for COVID-19, to a total of BND450 million.

The packages announced are applicable to all business sectors in the country and individuals, including those who are self-employed. The additional assistance hopes to ease the financial burden on businesses and affected individuals. The packages are (i) deferment of principal payment of loans or financing for all sectors; (ii) restructuring and deferring the principal repayment of personal loans and hire purchase facilities such as car loans or financing for not more than 10 years; (iii) provision of deferment of the principal amount or financing for real estate; (iv) restructuring any outstanding credit card balance to loans for not more than three years for individuals affected in the private sector only including the self-employed; and (v) all bank fees and charges related to the above-mentioned facilities, except for third party charges, to be waived.



Skim Kebajikan Negara (SKN)

The system is introduced to align the processes of social assistance provided by various agencies in Brunei Darussalam

SISTEM KEBAJIKAN NEGARA(SKN)
adalah platform bagi orang awam, khususnya rakyat dan penduduk di Negara Brunei Darussalam, yang layak untuk membuat permohonan bantuan kebajikan secara dalam talian di www.skn.gov.bn

Cara Membuat Permohonan Melalui SKN

- 1 SEDIAKAN**
Sediakan emel dan dokumen
- 2 DAFTAR AKAUN SKN**
Daftar di laman www.skn.gov.bn
- 3 LENGKAPKAN PROFIL**
Kemaskini profil dengan butiri peribadi anda
- 4 MEMBUAT PERMOHONAN**
Hadapkan bantuan

SETIAP PERMOHONAN YANG DITERIMA AKAN DINILAI BAGI PENGESAHAN KELAYAKAN BANTUAN

Dokumen yang diperlukan:

- Salinan kad pintar pemohon;
- Kad pintar suami/isteri/anak dalam tanggungan;
- Sijil kelahiran anak-anak;
- Sijil perkahwinan/ceraai;
- Penyata gaji;
- Pengesahan ketua kampung

SISTEM KEBAJIKAN

The Government introduced the National Welfare System, also known as Sistem Kebajikan Negara (SKN), in July 2020, to align the processes of social assistance provided by various agencies in Brunei Darussalam, such as the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Religious Affairs, and Ministry of Education.

SKN was launched with the aim to improve the effectiveness of the provision of social assistance in the country and to ensure that those truly in need are assisted and not left behind.

During the pandemic, it was also utilised in the provision of financial assistance to those affected by COVID-19, namely retrenched employees, workers who are on unpaid leave for over seven days or issued a quarantine order, as well as self-employed individuals or freelancers. Single employees who are eligible for the aid received \$250 per month, while married workers received an additional \$50 for each dependent, including their spouse and up to four children aged below 18 years old.

This aid was part of the Government's additional measures to assist struggling individuals and businesses amid extended coronavirus restrictions.



LOCALISATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE AGENDA

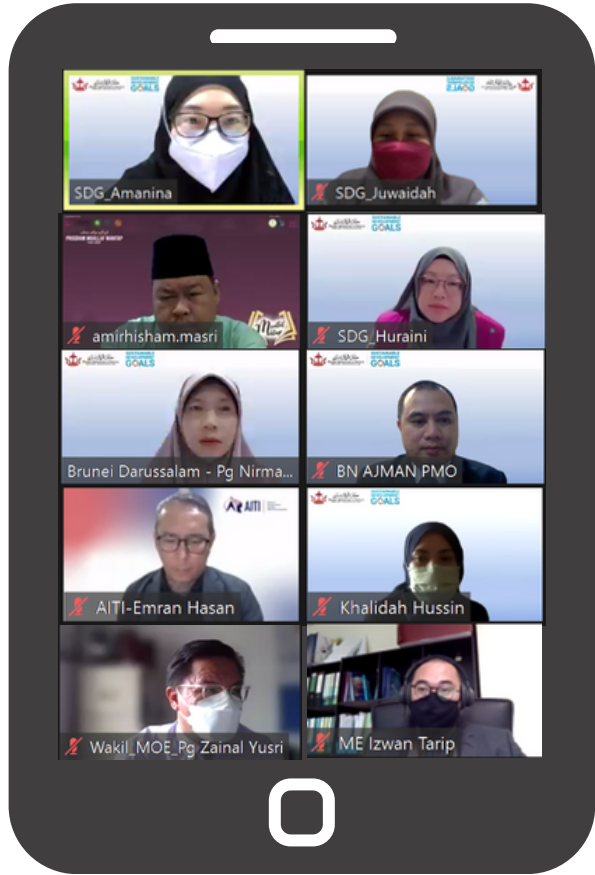
As reported in the Brunei Darussalam Annual Report 2021, Brunei Darussalam is constantly working towards ensuring the effective implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. Several gaps to support the localisation of the sustainable agenda were identified which calls for further improvement in coordination, alignment, monitoring, and harmonization of the Sustainable Development Goals with the national agenda.

The Special National Coordinating Committee on SDGs (JKPK SDGs) has been actively progressing plans of action to address those gaps regardless of constraints brought upon by the COVID-19 measures. The committee met as scheduled to ensure the pace of implementation remains on track. Achievement so far is beginning to solidify the foundation to act better and effectively.

Data Monitoring Capacity

The SDGs Technical Working Group (SDGTWG) establishment in 2021, began with a necessary undertaking to identify SDG priority indicators for Brunei Darussalam through two main mechanisms (i) a collaborative platform with line ministries and key agencies facilitated by the Department of Statistics, Department of Economic Planning and Statistics, Ministry of Finance and Economy (MOFE), and (ii) a web-based information repository, called SDG tracker, with strong collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

With the identification of priority indicators and a database that provides a snapshot of Brunei Darussalam's sustainability agenda, prospective actions ahead would be more strategic and focused to address what matters for Brunei Darussalam.



TIMELINE FOR SETTING UP SDG TRACKER



- 1 Initiation phase completed in February 2022
- 2 Review and Validate SDGs Indicators phase completed in October 2022
- 3 Target Setting (Ongoing)

Effective Communication Plan

The knowledge gap on the 2030 Agenda at the grassroots level remains and the Committee saw this opportunity in building a centralised information hub on the national implementation of SDGs through the setting up of a national SDGs website. The website is expected to be ready in the first quarter of the year 2023.

Another platform is social media specifically Instagram which was launched on 31 October 2022. In the short and long run, the contribution of digital outreach is hoped to inspire the local communities on the benefits of the 2030 Agenda in supporting the nation's desire in bringing more active participatory communities into the global agenda.

Local and International Partnership

One of the Committee's strategic initiatives to localize the 2030 Agenda is to connect with proactive stakeholders in sustainable agenda and establish a tie as SDG Partners. Building such a partnership is potentially the beginning of the greater collaboration in the implementation of the SDGs.

So far, 10 stakeholders have been engaged, encompassing non-governmental organisations, financial institutions, and civil society organisations. Plans are underway to engage with more stakeholders including academic institutions and the private sector.



International/Regional Participation

The partnership does not end at the national level. Five international/regional meetings were attended by the JKPK SDGs Secretariat.

- Ninth Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development
- Jakarta Forum on ASEAN-China Relations: Advancing the Implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda Through Exploring Cooperation between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and China's Global Development Initiative.
- Sixth High-Level Brainstorming Dialogue on Enhancing Complementarities between ASEAN Community Vision 2035 and United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- 2022 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
- 2022 Effective Development Co-operation Summit.

Each participation has its merit in contributing to the JKPK SDGs Secretariat's efforts in assisting the Committee to implement its activities. Other than gaining knowledge from various perspectives, practices and studies across 17 goals, a network of potential partners has also widened. In May 2022, Brunei Darussalam joined the Group of Friends of Global Development Initiative (GDI) led by the People's Republic of China. Soon, Brunei Darussalam seeks potential mutual benefits centred around the three key areas of strengthening policy dialogue, sharing best practices, and promoting practical cooperation.

UNDP Introductory Workshop

With the UNDP as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, an introductory workshop entitled role of UNDP and Experiences in Localising the SDGs was held virtually on 9th March 2022. The webinar garnered a wide audience in Brunei Darussalam and achieved its objective to raise awareness that can help to improve the implementation of SDGs.



Courtesy call from the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRCO)

On 19th July 2022, the JKPK SDGs Secretariat had the pleasure of meeting Her Excellency Karima El Korri, United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) in Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei Darussalam with Dr. Richard Marshall, Senior Economist and Ms. Juanita Joseph, Head of UN Resident Coordinator & Strategic Planning.

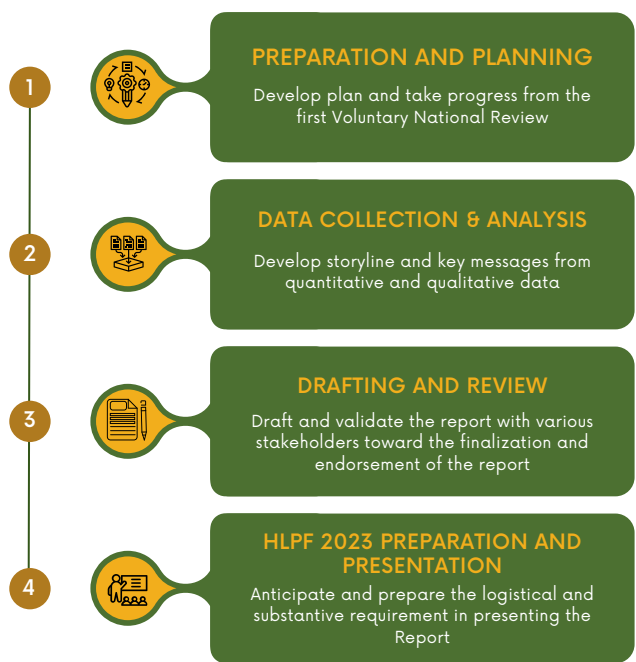
Noting the achievements made so far by Brunei Darussalam, Her Excellency shared the best approach and practices fitting to Brunei Darussalam's context especially stakeholder engagement for the preparation for the Second Voluntary National Review (VNR).

On this note, UNRCO stood ready to support Brunei Darussalam's endeavour especially VNR preparation as well as addressing SDGs implementation gap.



PREPARATION FOR THE SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW

Brunei Darussalam will be submitting the Second Voluntary National Review at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2023. To ensure an inclusive report on the Sustainable Development Goals' progress, the Secretariat incorporates a whole-of-nation process in the 2nd VNR preparation. Guided by partners from the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 4 phases are set as illustrated.



The process is now in Phase 2 and is expected to transition to Phase 3 soon. Phase 2 itself has a 3-steps process to undertake. First, data collection is through the stocktaking progress of the first VNR from the relevant agencies. Second, in searching for a primary source of whole-of-nations input, a national workshop was organized on 31 October - 2 November 2022. The workshop is only the beginning of gathering input from everyone. As the Secretariat is beginning to understand the inputs gathered so far, the third step kicks in which is a deep-dive process on issues requiring national attention.

THE NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NATIONAL WORKSHOP OF SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW

“

...convergence and resilience which we all witnessed during the pandemic gave us a preview of what we can achieve if **we support each other and work together effectively and respectfully**. This one of the essences of the Sustainable Development goals, to embrace the spirit of togetherness to ensure **no one is left behind**.

”



Excerpt from Opening Speech by the Honourable Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Mohd Amin Liew bin Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II



“

Seven years on, and despite major setbacks, **the SDGs remain our North Star**. They are more valuable than ever and cannot afford any further delays. We need to act now and today's meeting is a **positive sign that Brunei is still on board**.

”

Excerpt from Keynote Speech by Her Excellency Karima El Korri, United Nations Resident Coordinator for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam

The workshop offered an overview of global, regional, and local progress of the global sustainability agenda, presented by expertise from the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Development Programme and Department of Statistics, Ministry of Finance and Economy.

A dialogue on Goal 13 (Climate Action) was engaging, bringing different perspectives brought by representatives from the Department of Environment, Parks and Recreation, Ministry of Development; Bank Islam Brunei Darussalam; Universiti Brunei Darussalam; Bruwild; and Science Technology Environment Partnership Centre (STEP).

Other than that, 5 focused groups discussions were held, looking into the 5 'P's namely People, Planet, Prosperity, Partnership and Peace. The outcomes sets a motion in forming a storyline for the Second Voluntary National Review report.



SPECIAL FEATURE



My Action for SDGs



How did it begin?

My Actions For SDGs started as an awareness campaign that aims to create a positive change in society toward Sustainable Development Goals through education, empowerment, and engagement.

The campaign was founded by Nurul Hadina Haji Alias as an ASEAN MY World 2030 Advocate who was appointed from June 2018 to June 2019 by the UN SDG Action Campaign. Since then, recruitment of members was active. In 2020, the team has expanded to a total of 15 youths from diverse backgrounds.

Which target group are you focusing on?

Since its inception, we have been actively engaging with Bruneian youths in the hopes of raising awareness about the importance of taking action for the Global Goals and providing the necessary knowledge and skills to empower individuals to take action for the people, planet, and prosperity. The earliest event conducted was the Youth For SDGs program which involved the mass mobilization of 140 youths around Bandar Seri Begawan to ask which six of the Global Goals the public is most concerned about, followed by the Youth For SDGs Forum and Exhibition in celebration of the Global Day Of Action 2018.

Which goals have you contributed to?



SDG GOAL 17

We collaborated with the private and public sectors in several SDG-themed programs. In collaboration with the Department Of Community Development and in conjunction with Universal Children's Day 2021, we held a virtual art competition with the theme Reimagining The Future After COVID-19 for children aged 5 to 12 years old.



SDG GOAL 4

More recently in June, the team led the planning and execution of the Sustainability Ambassador Program under the Sustainable Nation Campaign with BIBD SME360 and Community For Brunei which aimed to empower twenty students with the knowledge, skills, and mindset to create a more sustainable future. The program encourages students to positively act and respond to the urgent climate change crisis by inspiring them with local sustainability efforts by Enevo and Treelane farm, equipping them with the skills, tools, and knowledge on the SDGs and Circular Economy. The result of this program is to empower students to explore ideas and implement their solutions in their schools which will potentially lead to collective action.

What are the difficulties you have to face?

We rely heavily on a group of youth volunteers whose commitment to their work and education can sometimes delay the organisation’s progress towards achieving the vision and mission. Nevertheless, we still continue to manage our time to the best of our capacity while maintaining integrity and dedication to executing planned events and collaborations.

The organisation also faces difficulties in obtaining funding and sponsorship but is grateful for the support given in terms of event spaces, and opportunities to exhibit and speak about the SDGs to the public. Although the organization keeps track of the basic number of programs and events, the organization is still looking for ways to measure and monitor the effectiveness and the social impact of such programs.



What are your future plans?

We hope to continue learning and growing in our effort to raise awareness about the importance of Sustainable Development Goals. The organisation’s plans involve focusing on younger children to inspire them to find ways to adopt a sustainable lifestyle and continue to help upskill the next generation with the right attitudes, skills, and mindset through Sustainability Literacy.

By maintaining a network of volunteers, youth organisations, and the private sector, the organization will continue to align our efforts with the government sector to collectively take action for the Sustainable Development Goals.



CONCLUSION

Both pandemic and endemic phases of the global COVID-19 might have impeded the progress of the 2030 Agenda in Brunei Darussalam, but it was not neglected. The achievement was small but significant to build back better through the protection of the planet, the livelihood of people, and the prosperity of women.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about unprecedented challenges on lives and societies and threatened to set back the global community in achieving the SDG Goals. Amidst the challenges, Brunei Darussalam continued its journey to support the SDG agenda, coupled with the government's swift and pre-emptive action was able to continue the pursuit of sustainability.

The Government's achievements were not limited to these five (5) goals. More progress across the remaining Sustainable Development Goal that complements the national efforts to realize the Wawasan 2035. More opportunities to share this progress, especially in the year 2023 when Brunei Darussalam presents her 2nd Voluntary National Review to the High-Level Political Forum 2023 in July 2023.

Overall, impactful achievements are expected in the year 2023 to bring us closer to stronger foundation to integrate sustainability at the national level.





**SECRETARIAT TO SPECIAL NATIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**

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