**INPUT FROM THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, MALAYSIA**

**FOR**

**THE X SESSION OF THE OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON AGEING, 2019**

**Focus Area: Education, training, life-long learning and capacity-building**

Overview

Promoting life-long learning (LLL) is one of the six strategies in the National Policy and Plan of Actions for the Older Persons (2011-2020). The National Advisory and Consultative Council for Older Persons (NACCOP) was set up to implement and monitor programs set up under the Plan of Actions. NACCOP is chaired by the Minister of Women, Family and Community Development and the members are representatives from various ministries, agencies, organisations including NGOs, academicians as well as individuals who have special interests and expertise in the welfare of older persons. Seven committees are set up to support the function of the Council. One of which is the committee of Education and Spirituality chaired by the Ministry of Education.

In addition, enculturation of life-long learning (LLL) is one of the seven strategies in the National Higher Education Strategic Plan (2007-2020) under the Ministry of Higher Education (now Ministry of Education, MoE) to promote active citizenship and evenness in social status as well as fulfilling individual and manpower needs of the country. Following the Strategic Plan, the Blueprint on Enculturation of Lifelong Learning was formulated in 2011 which acknowledges LLL as the third pillar of human capital development.

The first University of the Third Age (U3A) in Malaysia was set up in affiliation with the Malaysian Research Institute on Ageing, University Putra Malaysia in 2008 to encourage learning for leisure among the elderly. Among the courses offered are religious studies, photography, arts, culinary, languages and information technology. U3A has also partnered with community colleges and NGOs to offer such programmes.

Universities also offer courses at discounted fees of up to 50% from normal course fees to older persons to encourage them to further their education. A portal for LLL has been set up by MoE to ease the accessibility to information on LLL. A committee on LLL was also set up at MoE level to oversee the implementation of LLL in the country.

Data on participation of LLL including enrolment of older persons in public universities are recorded by MoE and selected achievements are reported periodically at the NACCOP’s meeting.

Key issues and challenges

Availability of and accessibility to LLL course for older persons especially at community-level is still limited. Efforts to promote and advocate LLL among older persons need to be increased. In addition, collaboration among all stakeholders should also be strengthened to ensure an integrated approach towards encouraging LLL among older persons particularly in providing sufficient and elderly-friendly services and infrastructure. Although there is a structured Blueprint for LLL, the current focus of the Blueprint is on upgrading and up-skilling the education and skills level of working adults.

Statistic

There is no known comprehensive study done on education or LLL for older persons. The statistic as per Table 1 shows the number of older persons who have graduated from both public and private universities:

 Table 1: Number of older persons graduated from public and private universities

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **GRADUANDS** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| Doctorate | 43 | 59 | 78 |
| Masters | 95 | 56 | 59 |
| Post-Graduate Diploma  | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| First Degree | 58 | 35 | 48 |
| Diploma | 5 | 7 | 6 |
| Certificate | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Professional Certificate | 5 | 0 | 2 |

 sources: Ministry of Education, Malaysia

Complaints mechanism

Malaysia has established a common complaints mechanism for feedback, complaints and seeking redress from any alleged injustice, wrongdoings or discrimination allegedly by the public sector. The system is called the Public Complaint Management System, or SISPAA which is monitored by the Public Complaint Bureau of the Prime Minister’s Department.