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**HRD CORP AND SME ASSOCIATION OF MALAYSIA
INTRODUCE FIRST HYDROPONIC SMART FARMING PILOT PROJECT
FOR ORANG ASLI**

Project aims to empower Tapah's Orang Asli Community with the skills and knowledge to become modern agropreneurs

Tapah, 2 November 2022 – Human Resource Development Corporation (HRD Corp) has kickstarted its collaboration with SME Association of Malaysia (SME Association) with the hydroponic smart farming pilot project for the Orang Asli community here today. This follows the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between both parties to develop training and upskilling programmes for the local communities last month.

The first-of-its-kind project for the Orang Asli community provides them with the skills and knowledge to adopt innovative hydroponic farming techniques in their local farms. This will help them in becoming self-sufficient and improving food security within their communities. Beyond that, the project will also provide them with entrepreneurship knowledge to turn this into a viable business while feeding into the overall local food supply chain.

HRD Corp collaborated with local Tok Batins and the Department of Orang Asli Development (JAKOA) to identify the right target participants for the project. As a result, the pilot project was implemented in Kampung Orang Asli Batu 6, and Sg Chenderiang Tapah, featuring 50 individuals. Participants will receive training on setting up and running a hydroponic farm, the different techniques and methods involved and how to ensure quality crop yield.

They will also learn how to turn this into a viable business through marketing, accounting and understanding the agriculture supply chain. Participants will also receive the right tools, seedlings and more from SME Association, to help them get started. Upon completing the training programme, participants will receive a joint certification from HRD Corp and SME Association. This will be recognised within relevant industries.

The hydroponic farming techniques and training curriculum were developed through input from experienced farmers within the SME Association network. HRD Corp aims to upskill 100 members of the Orang Asli community in Tapah by the end of the year.

Hydroponic farming fits with the infrastructure already available within the Orang Asli communities in Tapah. It is a farming method that replaces soil with nutrient-rich water. These nutrients include magnesium, phosphorus, calcium, and other 'plant food' crops need to thrive. It also reduces risks associated with traditional farming methods, such as unpredictable weather, insects, pests, and diseases to produce.

For more information on this smart hydroponic project, please visit www.hrdcorp.gov.my

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About Human Resource Development Corporation (HRD Corp):

Human Resource Development Corporation (HRD Corp) was established in 1993 as the Human Resources Development Council. It was incorporated into Pembangunan Sumber Manusia Berhad through the enactment of the Pembangunan Sumber Manusia Berhad Act 2001.

As an agency under the Ministry of Human Resources, it is responsible for the collection of levy from key industries and the disbursement of training grants to registered employers through its internal mechanisms known as the Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF).

In April 2021, HRDF became HRD Corp. The name change is a reflection of its new responsibilities, directions and mission. These include expanding its workforce upskilling and reskilling efforts to all Malaysian employers and individuals; and providing income-generating opportunities to all communities in need.

This transformation is in line with HRD Corp's ambition of driving Malaysia's talent development aspirations for the long term.

For more information, visit HRD Corp website – www.hrdcorp.gov.my.