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HRD CORP AND LOCAL PARTNERS LEAD THE WAY IN STRENGTHENING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN SABAH

Collaboration with Key Partners to Advance Skills Training and Develop a Future-Ready Workforce for Sabah's Sustainable Agriculture Sector

SANDAKAN, 6 September 2024 – Human Resource Development Corporation (HRD Corp) held the Forum on Future Workforce in Sustainable Agriculture at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Sandakan Campus today in a move to nurture future talents to lead the way in sustainable agriculture. The Minister of Human Resources, Yang Berhormat Steven Sim Chee Keong was present at the event along with representatives from Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Sabah Agriculture Department (SAD), and East Malaysia Planters' Association (EMPA).

The events mark a significant milestone for the state as collaborative ties between HRD Corp, UMS, SAD and EMPA were formalised to address the evolving needs of Sabah's agricultural sector. The Minister of Human Resources, Yang Berhormat Steven Sim Chee Keong handed over Letters of Intent (LOI) to the representatives of the partners to signify a joint effort to cultivate a future-proof workforce that is ready to strengthen and grow the state's sustainable agriculture sector.

The collaboration with UMS underscores the importance of aligning academic expertise with industry needs. The LOI between HRD Corp and UMS will pave the way for a structured adoption of the Industrial Training Scheme (ITS) and Future Workers Training (FWT) scheme. This partnership aims to transform UMS into a central hub for skills training, particularly in sustainable agriculture, by utilising its advanced lab facilities and providing a steady supply of qualified local trainers to HRD Corp's training providers.

Meanwhile, the collaboration with the SAD aims to cultivate and nurture learning and development opportunities among employers in Sabah. As the regulator and governing agency for all agriculture and forestry activities, SAD is considering the integration of training and upskilling as a key element in the state's agriculture agenda. This strategic collaboration will drive the growth of training activities within related industries, ensuring that employers are equipped with a skilled workforce aligned with the state's sustainable agriculture goals.

The EMPA also formalised its commitment to advancing Learning & Development (L&D) initiatives among its 204 members. HRD Corp and EMPA will collaborate to drive proactive upskilling and reskilling activities, setting a benchmark for other associations to follow in the quest for human capital development in Sabah.

During the forum, industry experts, employers and government agencies came together to discuss crucial topics surrounding the importance of a future-ready workforce in driving sustainable agriculture. At the same time, the panel also zoomed into topics such as integrating

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environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles into the agricultural sector, particularly in the face of rapid technological advancements and the increasing importance of sustainability.

The Forum on Future Workforce in Sustainable Agriculture not only served as a platform for important dialogues but also marked the beginning of a more integrated and collaborative approach to workforce development in Sabah's agriculture sector. With the support of HRD Corp and its partners, the future of sustainable agriculture in Sabah looks promising, as it prepares to meet both local and global demands with a competent and future-ready workforce.

Also present at the event was the Deputy Chairman of HRD Corp, Yang Berusaha Tuan Ahsim Jamat; Chief Executive of HRD Corp, Yang Berbahagia Datuk Wira Shahul Dawood; and Registrar of UMS, Yang Berusaha Encik Luqman Ridha Anwar.

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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 collecting levies from key industries and disbursing 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 reflects 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 the HRD Corp website – www.hrdcorp.gov.my.