

# **Empowering Future Leaders: Advancing the SDGs through University-Led Student Initiatives for Enduring Relevance in Higher Education**

**Heriot-Watt University Malaysia – EmPOWER Programme**

## **Authors**

**Renuga Tharuma Rethinam  
Saraswathy Nalatambi  
Lee J. Peter  
Siti Nuralia Mohd Nazor**

# Overview

**The EmPOWER Programme bridges academic learning with real-world challenges through:**

- Experiential learning, leadership, and civic engagement.
- Transferable skills for the modern workforce.
- IMPACT Projects 2024: Building Flourishing Communities.
- Aligned with the United Nations SDGs.
- Student-led initiatives fostering leadership and responsibility.



# Strategic Partnerships

HWUM Students collaborated with a diverse range of strategic partners (see Table 1 on the poster), including NGOs, advocacy groups, and social enterprises, focusing on key community challenges.

NGO	Main Focus Area	Key SDG(s)	Key Skills Developed
Malaysia Association of Blind (MAB)	Blind support and education	4 & 10	Sensitivity, volunteerism
Fugee School	Refugee education	4 & 16	Education planning, empathy
Yayasan Chow Kit (YCK)	Safe spaces for at-risk youth	1, 3 & 10	Community engagement, advocacy
Malaysia Federation of Deaf (MFD)	Deaf awareness and inclusion	3 & 10	Accessibility, diversity leadership
Seven Tea One	Inclusive employment	8 & 10	Social enterprise, empathy
Jayadiri	Vocational upskilling	1, 8 & 10	Logistics, training
Epic Homes	Indigenous housing	1 & 11	Leadership, social entrepreneurship
PAWS	Animal welfare	15	Outreach, campaigning

# Selected Findings – Impact Projects 2024

## Example 1: Student Group ‘Harmony in Hands’ Supporting the Malaysia Federation of the Deaf

### Key Highlights:

- **Collaborative Crowdfunding Project**  
Students worked with MFD to raise awareness on Malaysian Sign Language and Deaf culture.
- **Inclusive Community Engagement**  
Activities included a silent film night, sign language challenges, and preschool visits—fostering unity between Deaf and hearing communities.
- **Outcome**  
The project enhanced leadership, communication, and critical thinking, reflecting EmPOWER Programme’s mission for experiential learning.



# Selected Findings – Impact Projects 2024

## Example 2: Student Group ‘The Catalysts of Change’ Supporting Yayasan Chow Kit, Kuala Lumpur

### Key Highlights:

- **Student-Led Fundraising Initiative**  
Partnered with Tutti Frutti to support children in need, including cancer patient Madya, through Yayasan Chow Kit.
- **On-Campus Yoghurt Stand**  
Operated a fundraising booth at HWUM, combining entrepreneurship with social purpose.
- **Outcome**  
Students cultivated teamwork, adaptability, and compassion—aligning with EmPOWER Programme’s goal of nurturing future-ready leaders.





# Selected Findings – Impact Projects 2024

## Example 3: Student Group ‘Footie for Fugee’ Supporting Fugee School, Kuala Lumpur

### Key Highlights:

- **Charity Football Match for Fugee School**  
Organised by students to raise RM7,000 in support of refugee education.
- **Sport as a Tool for Social Change**  
Demonstrated how football can unite communities and promote meaningful causes.
- **Outcome**  
Strengthened civic responsibility, resilience, and leadership among HWUM students.



# Analysis

Element	What Students Gain	Career & Societal Impact
<b>Skill Development</b>	Project planning, teamwork, fundraising, stakeholder management	Directly transferable to careers
<b>Real-World Engagement</b>	Working with NGOs, industry partners, communities	Better readiness for professional environments
<b>SDG Alignment</b>	Projects map to critical global goals	Inculcates global awareness & solutions mindset
<b>Reflection &amp; Recognition</b>	IMPACT Transcripts provide transcribed proof of holistic skills	Makes graduates stand out to employers
<b>Adaptive Learning</b>	Navigating unpredictable VUCA situations	Builds resilience and flexibility

# Conclusion

## Final Conclusion: The Impact of the Impact Projects 2024 under the EmPOWER Programme

- The Impact Projects 2024 blends academic learning with real-world purpose—empowering students to become **changemakers**, not just graduates.
- A model for university-led initiatives that promote **leadership, sustainability, and social impact**.

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