



# MERCY Malaysia International Humanitarian Conference

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### MERCY Malaysia International Humanitarian Conference

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# President's Speech

Dato' Dr. Ahmad Faizal Perdaus

Distinguished Guests, Respected Humanitarian Leaders, Esteemed Partners, and Members of the Global Community,

Good morning, and welcome to the MERCY Malaysia International Humanitarian Conference 2024. It is an immense honour to stand before you today, surrounded by so many dedicated individuals and organisations, united by a shared commitment to creating a more resilient and compassionate world.

The world today is more interconnected than ever, and yet this very interconnectivity has brought unprecedented challenges. From the devastating impacts of climate change to protracted conflicts, health crises, and economic fragility, the cascading effects of these compounded risks test the boundaries of our humanitarian efforts. It is against this backdrop that we gather here, united by the theme: Humanitarian Development Nexus: Building Resilience, Transforming Lives.

MERCY Malaysia was founded 25 years ago with a single purpose: to respond to the urgent medical needs of those affected by crises, starting with the conflict in Kosovo. Over the years, we have grown, adapted, and learned to meet the complex and evolving needs of communities in Malaysia and across the globe. Guided by the principles of humanity, impartiality, independence, and neutrality, our mission remains unwavering: to protect lives, uphold dignity, and build resilient communities in the face of adversity.

The MERCY Malaysia International Humanitarian Conference (MMIHC) was conceived as a platform for collaboration and knowledge sharing, and today it has grown into a hallmark event that brings together thought leaders, practitioners, and policymakers from across the humanitarian spectrum. It is a testament to the importance of partnerships and dialogue in addressing the multifaceted challenges we face.

This year's conference is designed not only to address current humanitarian issues but also to chart a course for the future. Over the next three days, we will delve into critical topics such as climate crises, health emergencies, humanitarian diplomacy, localisation, and the transformative potential of science and technology. Together, we will explore actionable solutions that transcend sectors, recognising that only through holistic approaches can we achieve sustainable outcomes.

I am particularly proud that MMIHC 2024 echoes MERCY Malaysia's 2030 Strategic Plan: Delivering Meaningful Humanitarian Action. This strategy underscores the importance of integrating humanitarian and development efforts to build resilience and ensure that our actions leave a lasting impact on the communities we serve.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we embark on this journey of collaboration and learning, let us remember the core purpose of our work: to serve humanity. Let this conference be a catalyst for new ideas, stronger partnerships, and bold action. Together, let us reaffirm our commitment to transforming lives, building resilience, and advancing the humanitarian-development nexus.

On behalf of MERCY Malaysia, I extend my deepest gratitude to all our partners, sponsors, and participants who have made this conference possible. Your presence here reaffirms the spirit of solidarity that drives our collective efforts.

Thank you, and I wish you all a productive and inspiring conference.

Together, let us build a better tomorrow.





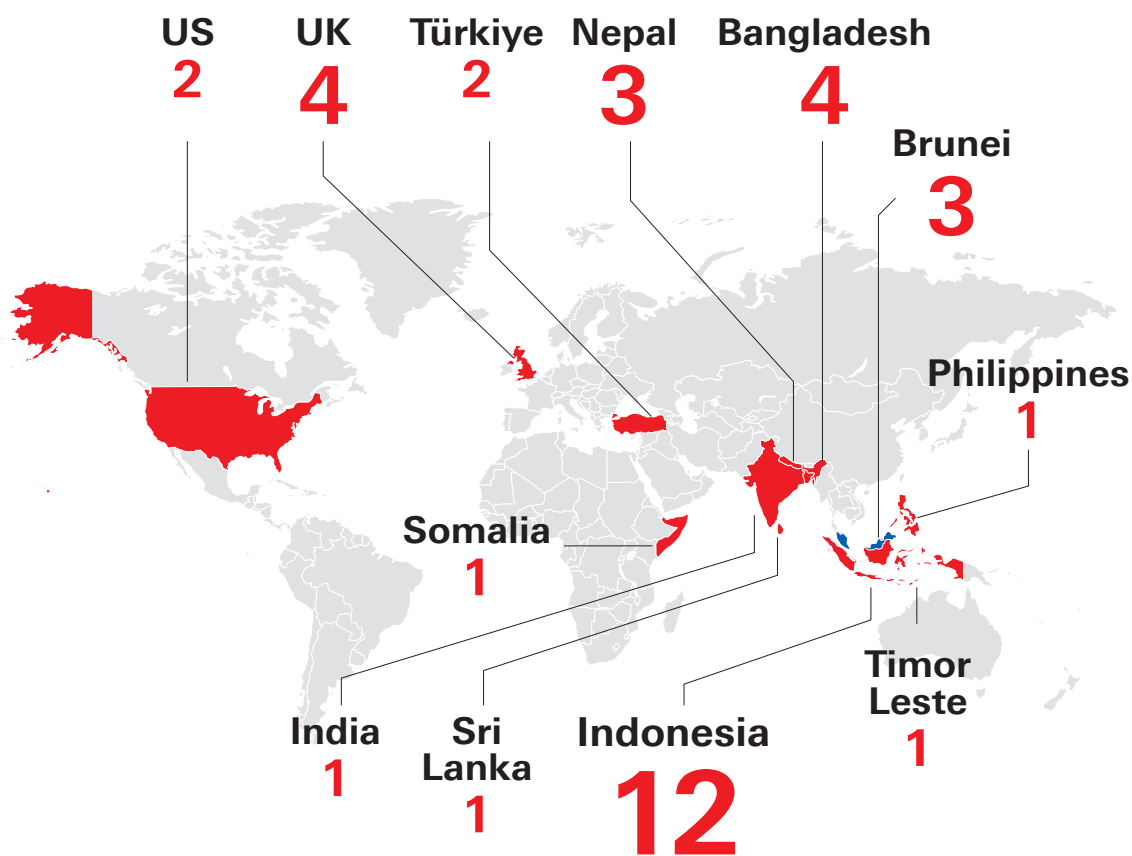
*Humanitarian Development Nexus:*

***Building  
Resilience,  
Transforming  
Lives***

# MMIHC 2024 in a Snapshot

 **190**  
participants

 **12**  
countries



 **59** Number of organizations represented





# Meet Our Partners

## Co-organiser



## Partner



## Sponsors



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# Conference Agenda

DAY ONE

**Plenary 1**  
*"Ensuring the Implementation of Humanitarian and Development Priorities to Meet Sustainable Goals"*  
  
Karima El Korri — United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam

**Plenary 2**  
*"From Data to Action: Digital City Platform for Resilient Communities"*  
Professor Terrence Fernando — Director of THINKlab, University of Salford, Manchester, England

**Plenary Panel**  
*"Humanitarian Action and NGO Governance"*  
  
Dato Aliyah Karen, Founder of Akrab Resources  
  
Keya Saha-Chaudhury — Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, International Council of Voluntary Agencies  
  
Mohammad Akhir — Director, Federal Territory Registrar of the Society  
  
Hasbe Zuraiha — Senior Manager, Advocacy, Yayasan Hasanah, Community Development & Humanitarian Disaster Relief

**Plenary 3**  
*"Why is Corporate Philanthropy Crucial in Humanitarian Assistance and Addressing Climate Change?"*  
Tan Sri Datuk Wira Azman Mokhtar — Chairman of the Board of Directors, University of Technology Malaysia (UTM)

|   |  |   |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Symposium A1</b><br>Pandemic Outbreak and Disease X Preparedness | <b>Symposium B1</b><br>Health and the Humanitarian — Development Nexus | <b>Symposium C1</b><br>Equitable Responsibility Sharing and Funding | <b>Symposium D1</b><br>Advancing Systemic Risk and Resilience Culture: A Transdisciplinary Approach | <b>Symposium E1</b><br>Financial Instruments and Investment Opportunities for Climate Resilient Initiatives | <b>Symposium F1</b><br>Development and Implementation of Humanitarian Response Planning |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|

DAY TWO

**Plenary 4**  
*"Managing Risk and Resilience in Humanitarian Agenda"*

Prof Gerard (Gerry) George — Group Managing Director, International Medical University (IMU), Malaysia

**Plenary 5**  
*"Is the Humanitarian Sector Contributing to Deterioration of Planetary Health?"*

Prof Tan Sri Dr. Jemilah Mahmood — Professor and Executive Director of Sunway Centre for Planetary Health, Malaysia

**Royal Plenary and Official Opening**  
His Royal Highness Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah ibni Almarhum Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah Al-Maghfur-Lah, Ruler of the State of Perak, Malaysia and Royal Patron of MERCY Malaysia

**Plenary 6**  
*"Climate Change and Sustainable Development: Challenges for Developing Nations"*

YB Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad — Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability, Malaysia

|   |  |   |  |  |   |
|---|--|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Forum A</b><br>Refugees Health: Optimising Outcomes              | <b>Forum B</b><br>Reimagining Healthcare through Digital Transformation                                | <b>Forum C</b><br>Driven Out: Global Response to the Plight of Forcibly Displaced People  | <b>Forum D</b><br>Humanitarian Reform & Sustainable Resilience: Retrospective & Prospective Agenda                             | <b>Forum E</b><br>Roles of Youth in Promoting Sustainable Development and Climate Action | <b>Forum F</b><br>Transforming Humanitarian Action to Address Gender-Based Violence   |
| <b>Symposium A2</b><br>The International Scene: Hotspots for Health | <b>Symposium B2</b><br>Prioritizing Child and Reproductive Health for Resilient and Thriving Societies | <b>Symposium C2</b><br>Promoting Understanding, Interaction, and Social Inclusion in the Protection of Migrants and Displaced Populations | <b>Symposium D2</b><br>Unlocking Anticipatory Action for Risk-informed Humanitarian Development Nexus: Progress and Challenges | <b>Symposium E2</b><br>Climate Change and Food Security                                  | <b>Symposium F2</b><br>Safeguarding, Nurturing and Empowering Resilience among Children in Humanitarian Development Context |

Conference  
Agenda

|  |  |  |   |  |  |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|
| DAY THREE  |  |  |   |  |  |
| <b>Plenary 7</b><br><i>"Public-Private-Civil Society Partnership in Health Emergencies and Crisis: The New Reality"</i><br><br>Dr. Puji Pujiono — Senior Advisor, The Pujiono Centre, Indonesia  |  |  |   |  |  |
| <b>Plenary 8</b><br><i>"William Lacy Swing Memorial Lecture"</i><br><br>Angeli Monique Siladan — Project Development and Programme Support Officer, International Organization for Migration (IOM) Malaysia<br><br>Nurul Izzah Anwar — Chairperson, Social & Economic Research Initiative (SERI), Malaysia |  |  |   |  |  |
| <b>Symposium A3</b><br>Managing Health Issues in Complex Emergencies   | <b>Symposium B3</b><br>Relief to Resilience: SDG for a Sustainable World | <b>Symposium C3</b><br>Durable Solutions for People Displaced by Conflict and Disaster | <b>Symposium D3</b><br>Building Resilience through Inclusive and Climate-Adaptive Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia Pacific | <b>Symposium E3</b><br>Climate Change and Social Justice: Ensuring No One Is Left Behind | <b>Symposium F3</b><br>Exploring Inclusive Strategies and Sustainable Approaches to Safeguard Vulnerable Communities during Emergencies and Crises |
| <b>Plenary 9</b><br><i>"Climate and Its Impact on Health and Humanitarian Action"</i><br><br>Dr. Maria Guevara — International Medical Secretary, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) International   |  |  |   |  |  |



# Conference Highlights

## Conference Highlights

### WORKSHOP 1 Emergency Medical Team (EMT)

- Essential skills for disaster response, ensuring preparedness, efficiency, and coordination.
- Promote best practices and understand the FAST Team concept to provide advanced field care and life-saving skills.



### WORKSHOP 2 Capacity Building and Empowerment of MHPSS in Humanitarian Work

- Increase awareness and understanding of mental health in humanitarian work.
- Empower participants with practical strategies, and promote collaboration and networking in MHPSS.





### WORKSHOP 3 Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Resilience

- Increase awareness and understanding of DRRM and climate resilience.
- Equip participants with essential strategies, enhance disaster preparedness and resilience.
- Promote collaboration and coordination in DRRM efforts.



### WORKSHOP 4 Management of Humanitarian Logistics

- Enhance understanding of humanitarian logistics.
- Equip participants with practical skills for optimizing supply chain operations.
- Improve efficiency and effectiveness of aid delivery.
- Promote collaboration and innovation among humanitarian logistics professionals.





## DAY ONE

The MERCY Malaysia International Humanitarian Conference 2024 emphasizes learning, sharing, and addressing humanitarian agendas. The present conference includes six streams covering diverse topics: health in emergencies and humanitarian settings, health in development contexts, forced migration and displacement, resilient communities and culture, climate change and sustainable development, and mental health and psychosocial support. The three-day event highlights collaborative efforts in humanitarian development, aiming to foster resilient communities and sustainable solutions worldwide.







Conference  
Highlights  
— Day 1

PLENARY 1

**“Ensuring the Implementation of  
Humanitarian and Development Priorities  
to Meet Sustainable Goals”**

Shaping a better future for all and finding solutions for contemporary interconnected challenges now require approaches that combine relief and long-term resilience building. In the past, humanitarian efforts and development aid were seen as separate arms, but it is important that efforts are intersected so humanitarian aid includes building infrastructure and development to ensure more sustainable futures and livelihoods.

These goals will not be achieved in isolation, partnerships must occur between the development and humanitarian actors, governments, private sectors, civil societies, universities, the media, and all other relevant sectors to achieve flourishing results.

**“The impact of all human efforts is profound and far-reaching. Every initiative, no matter how small, contributes to the larger goal.”**

**Karima El Korri** — United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam





## Conference Highlights — Day 1

### PLENARY 2

## **“From Data to Action: Digital City Platform for Resilient Communities”**

Floods have been rampant in recent years, causing a hike in mortality rates. Interventions for disaster prevention are vital for vulnerable regions with high frequencies of floods. One such intervention is technologically advanced early detection systems. Supplementing the detection model with socio-economic data improves the efficacy and accuracy of the system as a warning mechanism.

Infrastructure, population densities, and regional risks were some data recorded to simulate a vulnerable area, in order to devise a flood management and evacuation strategy. Cooperation between stakeholders is imperative to deliver an effective warning system for the community.

**“Disaster happens when hazard meets vulnerability.”**

**Prof Terrence Fernando** — Director of THINKlab, University of Salford, Manchester, England

Conference  
Highlights  
— Day 1

PLENARY PANEL

**“Humanitarian Action and NGO Governance”**

The global increase in NGOs and humanitarian organizations has sparked discussions on their benefits and governance challenges, such as fund management, leadership, resource allocation, regulatory adherence, and mission creep. To improve governance and transparency, NGOs were encouraged to implement sustainability reporting, seek expert guidance, and engage in networking.

In Malaysia, NGOs are registered under the Registrar of Society (ROS), which mandates uniform reporting and accountability. To date, according to the Federal Territories Registrar of Societies, there are 95,694 NGOs registered in Malaysia, excluding political NGOs. Poor governance can lead to misuse, money laundering, or terrorism financing due to high public trust and management weaknesses.

**“Good governance requires a constant balance between accountability and transparency.”**

**Razi Pahlavi Abdul Aziz** — Vice President II, MERCY Malaysia

PLENARY 3

**“Why is Corporate Philanthropy Crucial in Humanitarian Assistance and Addressing Climate Change?”**

The focus of business is shifting from solely maximizing shareholder value to addressing broader societal responsibilities. This change was catalyzed by the 2008 financial crisis, emphasizing the importance of sustainability and social impact. Companies are now seen as key players in addressing issues like inequality and climate change, leveraging their resources for societal benefit.

Moving forward, corporate philanthropy should emphasize advocacy, efficiency, essential needs, moral integrity, and accountability. Collaboration among businesses, governments, and civil society is crucial to fostering a more equitable and sustainable world, with a strong emphasis on education.

**“If we accept that we as a humanity, we are one.”**

**Tan Sri Datuk Wira Azman Mokhtar** — Chairman of the Board of Directors, University of Technology Malaysia (UTM)



## Conference Highlights

### — Day 1

## “Ignite Stage”

Silvia, a recent International Medical University graduate, earned the Aflame Student Award for her humanitarian efforts, including aiding Rohingya refugees and indigenous communities. She donated her award money to Viva Palestina, Malaysia, to support Gaza’s humanitarian crisis.

Inspired by her experiences and Dr. Refaat Alareer’s words, Silvia commits to raising awareness and advocating for those in need, aiming to make a significant impact both locally and globally. Her experiences motivate her to find ways to overcome challenges in humanitarian work and make a bigger difference.

**“If I must die, you must live to tell my story.”**

**Refaat Alareer** — Palestinian writer and poet

(Quoted by Miss Silvia Teow Su Quinn, International Medical University)

## “Fireside Chat”

The session discussed fragility, conflict, climate crises, health emergencies, and economic disruptions, emphasizing the importance of good intentions in humanitarian efforts to prevent harm. The conversation emphasized the need for new tools and tactics, particularly for educating young people about climate change, hunger and related humanitarian efforts. The need of coming together with creative ideas amid crisis was emphasized, as was the need to elevate partnerships.

Global institutions, particularly the United Nations, were identified as critical to promoting humanitarian assistance. Strategic collaborations, which pool expertise and resources, were judged necessary for effectively addressing the world’s most critical concerns.

**“No one puts their children in a boat unless the water is safer than the land.”**

**Warsan Shire** — Somali British writer and poet

(Quoted by Dr. Unni Krishnan, Global Humanitarian Director, PLAN International)



Conference  
Highlights  
— Day 2

## ROYAL PLENARY

**His Royal Highness Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah ibni Almarhum Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah Al-Maghfur-Lah  
Ruler of the State of Perak, Malaysia and Royal Patron of MERCY Malaysia**

MERCY Malaysia has contributed tirelessly towards the cultivation of strategies and practical action in ensuring vulnerable communities are protected for the past 25 years. Despite their efforts, humanitarian suffering still persists in the event of crisis, with the volume of conflicts taking a steep incline. Conflicts are now compounded by factors such as extreme weather, famine disease, poor sanitation and poverty, that exacerbate the crisis.

The emphasis on humanitarian interventions was imperative to halt this vicious cycle, whereby allocated funds suffice for responding to acute threats with none left for developmental efforts. Long-term solutions need to coincide with initiatives that pave a platform for equipping local communities in independently carrying themselves forward.

Nations should look into well-deciphered investment plans to safeguard and support the country during times of need. Such investments should be of a sustainable and responsible kind, capable of supporting those in need regardless of faith.



**"This is not about fixing the leak, but reinforcing the ship."**

**"When you exhausted all possibilities, remember, you haven't."**

**"The growing scale of the global crisis means the situation remains much the same today."**

**His Royal Highness Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah — Ruler of the State of Perak, Malaysia and Royal Patron of MERCY Malaysia**

## DAY TWO

### PLENARY 4

#### **“Managing Risk and Resilience in the Humanitarian Agenda”**

Effective management of humanitarian efforts requires systems that address delivery challenges by distinguishing between predictable, time-limited disasters and low-probability, high-impact crises. Efforts must focus on long-term planning, allocation of resources properly, and integration between public and private sectors. Ensuring community resilience enables recovery and adaptation, maintaining organization amid immediate and long-term challenges.

Sustainable organizational management emphasizes global-local collaboration and risk resilience to achieve enduring effectiveness. It is important to manage organizations sustainably over time to address universal organizing problems.

**“We need to navigate humanitarian efforts and harness the power of enterprise at the scale of government.”**

**Professor Gerard (Gerry) George** — Group Managing Director,  
International Medical University (IMU), Malaysia





Conference  
Highlights  
— Day 2



#### PLENARY 5

### **“Is the Humanitarian Sector Contributing to Deterioration of Planetary Health?”**

It is important to reflect and analyze the work being done in humanitarian and developmental aid and to ask ourselves questions such as “are we doing enough?” and “are we doing the right thing?”. It is important to keep efforts relevant to today’s changing systems.

The climate is continuously changing and not for the better, unfortunately. Rethinking planetary systems and how global and public health are interconnected is essential to safeguard health and the impact on the climate. It is important to re-evaluate humanitarian roles, incorporate preparedness, politics, investment and engagement into the systems.

**“We cannot sit back and accept that this is the state of the world.”**

**“We need to be truly collaborative; we need to challenge ourselves; we need to think outside the box and most importantly we need to have very honest conversations of whether what we did 25 years ago is relevant today.”**

**Prof Tan Sri Dr. Jemilah Mahmood** — Professor and Executive Director of Sunway Center for Planetary Health, Malaysia

Conference  
Highlights  
— Day 2

PLENARY 6

**“Climate Change and Sustainable Development:  
Challenges for Developing Nations”**

The global development crisis, intensified by climate change, is increasing humanitarian needs and causing disasters such as floods, storms, and conflicts. Regions like Malaysia are severely impacted, facing rising sea levels and ecosystem disruptions. Indigenous communities and low-income populations suffer the most, dealing with habitat loss, health issues, and economic instability.

Malaysia plans to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 45% by 2030 and reach net-zero emissions by 2050, emphasizing the need for global cooperation and climate justice. Humanitarian efforts must incorporate climate resilience and support vulnerable groups, as climate change affects all areas of human development. Urgent, collective action is essential for a sustainable and equitable future.

**“Our planet, our house, and our economy are in serious and immediate danger. This is not a problem we can kick out the road for future generations to sort. We have to draw a line and take responsibility for the damage that has been done, and we have to start to work on a solution today.”**

**“If you have the right goal, the right direction, and understanding all the dynamics, I believe that we can make that difference. History tells us that great changes often have the smallest beginning.”**

**YB Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad** — Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability, Malaysia



## Conference Highlights

### — Day 2

### “Cafe Talk”

The session highlighted the profound impact of humanitarian work through the experiences of MERCY Malaysia volunteers. Key themes included the struggles of refugees, the importance of gratitude, and empathy. Volunteers emphasized the fulfillment derived from humanitarian work, the importance of seizing opportunities for learning, and the necessity of mental health support in crises.

Stories from COVID-19 and flood relief efforts underscored the value of preparedness, continuous learning, and collective action. The session showcased compassion, resilience, and the transformative power of volunteering in making a difference in humanitarian efforts.

**“I am very grateful, I am still here, I still enjoy doing humanitarian work and I will do so for the rest of my life.”**

**Jasni Ramli** — Logistic Officer, MERCY Malaysia



## DAY THREE

### PLENARY 7

#### **“Public-Private-Civil Society Partnership in Health Emergencies and Crisis: The New Reality”**

Collaboration among the public, private, and civil society sectors is critical in dealing with health emergencies and disasters. Each sector offers unique strengths: the public sector enforces regulations, the private sector drives innovation, and civil society advocates for the vulnerable.

Effective partnerships require clear communication, transparency, capacity building, local empowerment, and sustainability. These sectors may avoid human suffering, needs, and optimize resources use by aligning demands and capabilities, as well as assuring scalability and long-term partnership. The emphasis was on developing strong, collaborative frameworks for addressing health crises efficiently and sustainably.

**“Turn narratives into action.”**

**“It is time for us to listen to one another.”**

**Dr. Puji Pujiono** — Senior Advisor, The Pujiono Centre, Indonesia







## Conference Highlights — Day 3

### PLENARY 8

#### **“William Lacy Swing Memorial Lecture”**

In Angeli Monique Siladan’ speech on behalf of the International Organization of Migration Malaysia, she honors the late Ambassador William Lacy Swing, a globally recognized humanitarian. His legacy inspires ongoing efforts to create a safer world for the vulnerable.

Highlighting the challenges of migration, which affects one in seven globally, the MMIHC 2024 emphasizes urgent humanitarian action amidst rising anti-immigrant sentiment. Key principles include prioritizing human dignity, fostering collaboration, and raising awareness. Effective policies must balance security with humanitarian needs, especially for the stateless. Unified efforts between government and society are crucial to address crises and ensure long-term stability and dignity for all.

**“If you can connect on a personal level, you can help bring peace”.**

**“One billion of our seven billion worlds are migrants, 1 in every 7 of us as a migrate, driving migration and demography, disaster, digital revolution, business technology; north-south disparities and environmental degradation”**

**Nurul Izzah Anwar** — Chairperson, Social & Economic Research Initiative (SERI) Malaysia

**PLENARY 9****“Climate and Its Impact on Health  
and Humanitarian Action”**

The drivers of climate change today are undeniable. The painful truth is that the planet fifty years ago and today is dramatically different, with vegetation and lakes evidently smaller today.

Biodiversity loss, pollution, increased diseases, economic impact and mental health impact are only a few of the many interconnected challenges that have come up. Fortunately, solutions do exist.

Restoring our natural habitat is essential. This can be better achieved with operational adaptation for resilience, making better assessments to anticipate disasters using data and targeting measures, and advocating for the less vulnerable.

**“It is our collective responsibility to save our only home, planet Earth.”**

**Dr. Maria Guevara** — International Medical Secretary, Medicine Sans Frontiers (MSF)

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**“Blitz Talk”**

Selflessness, embodying the aura that Nurse Zaliha embraces as she embarked on her journey to volunteer at Gaza. The mere sight of fatalities and near-site bombings was not a hurdle big enough to scare her home. Keeping God as her strength, she advised future volunteers to be extremely mentally prepared.

Similarly, Madam Nabilah channels her energy to the underprivileged communities via mobile health clinics at the same time emphasizing on quality healthcare education for the people regardless of their variates.

**“If you can’t help your nation or community, you can just help a person.”**

**Nabilah Yazid** — Health Programme Officer, MERCY Malaysia



## Conference Highlights

### — Day 3

## “Grand Forum”

The humanitarian sector is advancing with a focus on collaboration and innovation. Youth engagement and NGO agility are important to shape future responses. NGOs excel in rapid response and resilience building, supported by effective partnerships and integrated risk reduction strategies. Advocacy for refugees and transparency measures reinforce trust.

Local partnerships and regional cooperation are critical for effective disaster management. Overall, there's a collective push towards improving humanitarian efforts through enhanced communication, collaboration, and innovative approaches, ensuring more impactful and sustainable outcomes.

**“The best way to predict the future is to invent it.”**

**Dr. Unni Krishnan** — Global Humanitarian Director, PLAN International



## Conference Highlights

### — Day 3

## “Closing Remarks”

The conference, led by the President of the Organizing Society, expresses gratitude to all attendees, speakers, moderators, facilitators, the Organizing Committee, and the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) for their support. Key themes included realism, hope, aspiration, and actionable steps in addressing climate change, adaptation, and response. Emphasis was placed on advocacy, policy work, and the significant challenges in funding such events.

The importance of support from governments, agencies, and universities was highlighted, with a focus on aiding those in need globally. The conference reinforced the need for collective efforts and sustained commitment to tackling global issues.

**“We are not only prudent but we are seen to be prudent.”**

**“We are not important, the important people are those in need, the ones who are at the moment injured, without food, without water, anywhere they are in the world.”**

**Dato’ Dr. Ahmad Faizal Mohd Perdaus** — President, MERCY Malaysia

# Summaries of Streams

## **STREAM A**

### **Health in Emergencies and Humanitarian Settings**

Proactive and coordinated global health responses are crucial to prepare for a new pandemic. Drawing lessons from COVID-19, the discussions brought into the necessity for rapid responses, robust health systems, and comprehensive cooperation across governments and societies. Key themes included leveraging scientific advancements, such as genomic sequencing, and the significance of regional collaboration, innovative regulations, and strong political will. Consistent funding and rigorous simulations are emphasized as essential for effective crisis management.

Particular attention was given to the health needs of refugees and the barriers they face in accessing care, with case studies from Malaysia and other countries illustrating the complex challenges, especially for female refugees. Strategies for improvement focuses on multi-sector partnerships, inclusive insurance policies, and cultural competency. The discussions called for government compliance with international refugee conventions, stressing global cooperation and sustainable solutions for equitable healthcare access.

Throughout the sessions, speakers highlighted the urgent need for robust healthcare responses in diverse regions, particularly in conflict zones like Gaza. The critical role of adaptive responses was highlighted considering limited resources and infrastructure damage. Innovative solutions such as telemedicine and community health workers presented as vital for delivering essential healthcare in volatile environments.

A coordinated, proactive approach is necessary for future global health security and resilience. It calls for an international collaboration to mitigate humanitarian crises, protect vulnerable populations, and ensure that no one is left behind. The recurring message was clear: preparedness and a unified global effort are key to tackling health emergencies effectively and sustainably.

## Summaries of Streams

**“Preparedness is something that should be done in a proactive way, not reactive.”**

**Brig Gen (Dr.) Mohd Arshil Moideen** — Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Defense Health, National Defence University of Malaysia

**“Addressing refugee healthcare challenges demands urgent, inclusive policies.”**

**Dr. Ahmad Yusuf Yahaya** — Chief Coordinator, Islamic Medical Association of Malaysia

**“Together, we can make a big difference in health emergency prevention, preparedness, and response.”**

**Tan Sri Dato’ Seri Dr. Haji Noor Hisham Abdullah** — Chancellor, University of Cyberjaya, Former Director General of Health, Malaysia







## Summaries of Streams

### **STREAM B:** **Health in Development Context**

Human health is a fundamental right, yet the impacts of the many challenges faced in the world today continue to set-back the health and development of many communities significantly. The issues that cause immense vulnerabilities in communities are diverse; including natural disasters from poor planetary health and climate change, the emergence of diseases and the detrimental effects of existing diseases, poor sanitation and unclean water, poverty, scarcity of food, and of course conflict and war.

An important point worth to highlight is that these issues are not singular or unrelated, rather, they are all interconnected and require solutions that approach the issues with this in mind. An impactful solution will be achieved through cross-sector collaborations with increased data and information sharing across collaborators. Due to the interrelatedness of these issues, resolutions must tackle multiple pillars together and this can only be done with the collaborations between separate sectors. Working together with openness and realizing that by flowing together in one stream will be much more efficient and sustainable results can be achieved sooner.

## Summaries of Streams

Ultimately, development aid work, regardless of the causative reasons, all aim to empower the affected people to be able to lift themselves back up and develop further. Building resilience within affected communities is key. Another recurrent element of discussion was equipping affected communities with the basic skills, knowledge or aid so that they could strengthen themselves and become able to tackle some of their local issues without assistance.

This is not a hypothesized solution or theory; this is a tried and tested approach that has left lasting and positive impacts on affected communities globally. Of course, it is not unnoticed that many of the health and development aid organizations still require significant funding to carry out much of their work, and capable communities must never neglect this need.

**“When we leave, the communities will stay.”**

**Dr. Arief Rachman** — Member of Presidium, MER-C, Indonesia

**“Equitable health just shouldn’t be a privilege.”**

**Dato’ Dr. Hartini Zainuddin** — Co-Founder, Yayasan Chow Kit, Malaysia

**“Health is not just about health. It is so much bigger in the entire system.”**

**Prof. Dr. Khoo Suan Phaik** — Professor of Oral Pathology and Oral Medicine, School of Dentistry and Dean for Community Engagement & Sustainability, International Medical University (IMU), Malaysia

**“Apart from providing education, we need to support the training so that the outcomes are more sustainable.”**

**Dr. Nasuha Yaacob** — Consultant Obstetrician & Gynecologist, Ministry of Health Malaysia.

## Summaries of Streams

### **STREAM C:** **Forced Migration and Displacement**

The displacement of individuals from their country of origin has been rampant in recent years. Their plight caused the need to address this issue and culminate strategies as protective mechanisms for vulnerable communities. The themes touched on the responsibilities and management of refugees, curation of policies and legislations, humanitarian and social responses, future directions, and innovations.

The signatories of the 1951 Convention remain a heated topic in the many discussions held, several countries especially the Asia Pacific region did not partake in the agreement. They each adopted refugee laws and policies that vary across countries, some with emphasis on the efficacy of asylum systems, enforcing protection mechanisms, and demarcation of screening standards.

Parliamentarians play a principal role in advocating for legal reforms that can create an ecosystem that caters to social inclusion and economic development. Besides parliamentarians, the media is pivotal in acknowledging the consequences of misinformation in delivering true and honest news to ensure positive perceptions of the targeted communities.

Comprehensive strategies and approaches are needed to tackle the issue of long-term displacements. Implementing interventions such as skill development programs and cultural exchange events would foster interactions between local and host communities. Encouraging self-reliance in the community can be achieved through granting them employment. These efforts require a collective and collaborative operation between ministries, and governmental and non-governmental organizations to cope with the burden of resources.

## Summaries of Streams

**“The refugees are not the problem; they are the outcome of the problem.”**

**Adli Zakuan** — Head, Humanitarian Affairs UNHCR Malaysia

**“Engagements with the public can emphasize universal rights to safety and dignity irrespective of an individual’s legal status.”**

**YB Syerleena Abdul Rashid** — Chairperson, All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia (APPGM)

**“It’s one thing to take concern, it’s another to realize that they’re among us.”**

**Tricia Yeoh** — Chief Executive Officer, Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) Malaysia



## Summaries of Streams

### **STREAM D:** **Resilient Community and Culture**

The transdisciplinary approach to sustainable development in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) emphasizes the collaboration among academia, NGOs, and public and private sectors, demonstrated by effective flood management in Ormoc City, Philippines, and green infrastructure in Kamisaigocawa River, Japan. Indonesia's frequent natural disasters underscore the need for continuous real-time monitoring and community involvement, with higher education playing a crucial role in DRR. Empowering vulnerable groups, particularly women and children, is critical, supported by global frameworks like the Sendai Framework for DRR, and exemplified by the swift disaster response and community support of the Tzu Chi organization.

In Malaysia, disaster management prioritizes prevention and preparedness, enhancing resilience through stakeholder engagement and alignment with global targets. Challenges such as high-risk dams and debris flows necessitate robust DRR strategies, highlighted by Tenaga Nasional Berhad's Dam Disaster Management program and proposed comprehensive mitigation measures, including a National Geological Disasters Research Centre and an Early Warning System. The Hulu Langat project, over three years, aims to mitigate disaster risks promoting sustainable practices and community resilience.

Science-based programs instill the understanding of disaster risks among community leaders and members, fostering government-community collaboration in areas like Ulu Klang and Kampung Tok Muda. The Human Initiative in Indonesia leverages technology to enhance disaster response and community empowerment, while RAKAN NADMA improves cooperation between the government and various entities in Disaster Risk Management, focusing on volunteer coordination, capacity building, and public awareness despite facing challenges in safety, communication, and funding.



## Summaries of Streams

**“We need to work together and focus on improving disaster plans so that we can minimise damage.”**

**Prof Dr. Muksin Umar** — Vice Director, Tsunami and Disaster Mitigation Research Center (TDMRC) Universitas Syiah Kuala, Aceh, Indonesia

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**“We recognised each other’s skills, and we complimented each other instead of competing.”**

**Ts. Dr. Kogila Vani Annammala** — Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Civil Engineering Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM)

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**“Empowering young people is the world’s best chance of building resilient communities as they comprise the largest and most interconnected generation in history. Yet, young people are particularly vulnerable to disasters.”**

**Dr. Fashareena Muhamad** — Researcher, Southeast Asia Disaster Prevention Research Initiative Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)

## Summaries of Streams

### **STREAM E:**

#### **Climate Change and Sustainable Development**

A multifaceted approach to building climate resilience through financial innovation, youth engagement, food security, and social justice was the main highlight of this stream.

Key discussions focused on the pivotal role of financial institutions in promoting sustainability. Banks are increasingly investing in renewable energy and eco-friendly companies. Case studies, such as Indonesia's Human Initiative and the Penang Nature-Based Climate Adaptation Programme, demonstrated effective local solutions. These initiatives emphasized creating local jobs, improving food security, and enhancing urban climate resilience through strategic greening and flood management.

Youth involvement emerged as a crucial driver of climate action. Young people are leveraging social media, educational initiatives, and mental health training to promote sustainable practices and resilience. Notably, youth in Southeast Asia are bridging traditional communities and authorities through activism, workshops, and policy advocacy. Youth empowerment programs underscore the importance of supporting youth-led projects and advocacy, recognizing young people as vital contributors to sustainable solutions.

Food security in the face of climate change was another critical theme. Malaysia's agriculture sector's vulnerability highlighted the need for risk-informed development and resilient urban planning. Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction was promoted as a sustainable solution, integrating natural systems and stakeholder capabilities to enhance community resilience and provide cost-effective strategies to mitigate climate impacts.

Climate action needs to consider the disparate impacts on various groups, particularly vulnerable populations. Emphasis was placed on multi-level governance, community involvement, and policies that address non-economic losses while empowering marginalized groups. Concepts like Doughnut Economics were presented to illustrate the need for sustainable economic development that balances social equity and ecological limits.

## Summaries of Streams

**“Please keep caring, and keep greening.”**

**Robert Gass** — Representative, UNICEF Malaysia and Special Representative, Brunei Darussalam

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**“Break down internal silos, and move towards more effective sustainable and well-being communities.”**

**Dr. Azmizam Abd. Rashid** — Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Urbanice Malaysia

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**“We have to live with risk, we have to build local resilience.”**

**Dr. Khamarrul Azahari Razak** — Director, Disaster Preparedness & Prevention Center (DPPC), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) and Executive Council Member, MERCY Malaysia

## Summaries of Streams

### **STREAM F:** **Mental Health and Psychosocial Support**

Surveillance and data-driven approaches are pivotal for effective humanitarian response planning, as they inform targeted interventions and stakeholder engagement. Advancements in research, training, and innovation are essential to address the mental health crisis, promoting collaborative and multifaceted approaches for system transformation.

Addressing gender-based violence (GBV) involves understanding cultural contexts, engaging local leaders, and implementing trauma-informed and community-empowerment strategies. Eradicating GBV requires efforts, including education, legislative advocacy, and economic empowerment programs to prevent exploitation.

The mental health of refugees, particularly in protracted crises, necessitates integrated and trauma-informed care, with safe spaces and specialized support playing important roles. Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS) and community-based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) for children provide critical support, fostering resilience through psychosocial activities and structured environments.

Additionally, initiatives like Buddy Bear helpline for children and Talian Kasih MERCY for students abroad during disasters highlight the diverse needs across age groups and the importance of tailored support systems. In crises like the Derna floods in Libya, immediate interventions such as Psychological First Aid (PFA) and stress management education were essential in helping survivors transition from shock to stability.

Military-related mental health concerns, including addressing stigma and promoting resilience, are crucial for operational effectiveness. Refugee children, especially unaccompanied minors, face significant challenges, necessitating both medical and mental health support. A holistic and inclusive approach to MHPSS, emphasizing the importance of tailored interventions, community empowerment, and the integration of mental health into all facets of humanitarian response would be necessary.

**“We believe that stability at home will provide stability for the soldier or the troop to perform well.”**

**Lt. Kol. (B) Shahidah Leong Abdullah** — Clinical Psychologist & Lecturer, National Defence University of Malaysia

**“Disaster destroys trust. So, it is very important to fill in this destruction with activities whereby people are going to feel safe again.”**

**Silviane Bonedai** — Special Educator, 2 Way Centre Malaysia

**“Combating GBV requires a multidimensional approach, collaborative efforts, and commitment by all parties to address cultural norms, economic disparity, and the root causes of violence.”**

**Hatice Varol** — Humanitarian Relief Foundation Turkey



# Participant Reflections

"Great line up of speakers and topics!"

"Full of information and knowledge."

"It was very inspiring, practical and hopeful."

"Insightful and inspiring."

"MERCY has curated a splendid platform for NGOs, Private, Public, Academia to exchange knowledge in relation to humanitarian from data driven to leveraging the community."

"Exposure of such events to youth will help change perspectives and instill interest in humanitarian works."

"Learnt lots of new insights, research, discussion and persuasive ideas from plenaries."

"Level of expertise and knowledge of the presenters are excellent."



# E-Poster Summaries



## **SAMPLE 1**

### **Assessing Flood Disaster Preparedness and Disaster Education Exposure Among the Adolescents in Selangor, Malaysia**

**Dr. Khairunnisa Makmon**  
**Dr. Ahmad Zaid Fattah Azman**  
**Prof.Dr. Rosliza Abdul Manaf**  
**Prof. Madya Ts Dr. Mohd Rafee Baharudin**

1. Ministry of Health Malaysia
2. Department of Community Health, Faculty of Health Sciences and Medicines, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)

## **Objectives of Project**

To determine the disaster education exposure and level of flood disaster preparedness among adolescents in Selangor, Malaysia.

## **Description of Project**

A two-parallel arm, single-blind cluster-randomized controlled trial conducted among adolescents age 13 to 15 years attended at selected secondary school in Selangor between Jun 2023 till January 2024. Self-reported questionnaire on flood disaster preparedness index tool and two items on disaster exposure and source of disaster exposure were assessed among the participants at the baseline of study.

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## Outcome Measures /Key Results

There were 287 people recruited for this study. The median age of participants was 14 years old, with a comparable percentage of male and female participants. The results indicated that the majority of participants, specifically 234 individuals, which accounts for 82.9%, didn't have any disaster education training. The primary platforms via which individuals received disaster education were the internet (37%), television (24%), family and friends (15%), schools (10%), radio (9%), and periodicals or newspapers (5%). Only 51% of participants were moderately prepared for flood disasters, and a merely 25% were highly prepared to face flood disasters, as indicated in this study.

## Outcome of Projects

The study highlights the inadequacy of disaster education among adolescents, potentially affecting their capability and knowledge in disaster situations. It emphasizes the importance of including adolescents in risk communication and disaster education efforts to enhance community resilience. Tailoring disaster-related information to adolescents through social media, television, and schools is crucial for increasing their awareness and knowledge. Education on flood disaster preparedness plays a pivotal role in empowering vulnerable communities with the necessary skills and knowledge to manage flood disasters effectively. These programs are essential for providing life-saving information and expertise to adolescents, contributing to the development of resilient communities capable of enduring and recovering from disasters.

# Photo Gallery

















