

Malaysia's Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2021: Key Messages

Introduction

Sustainable and inclusive development has always been a key principle in the nation's development planning. Efforts to mainstream SDGs in national development planning were undertaken via the alignment of SDGs in the five-year national development plans, the development of the SDG data and the establishment of a multi-stakeholder institutional framework. Malaysia's VNR 2021 is the second report submitted as part of the review of the 2030 Agenda. The stakeholder engagement for the VNR 2021 commenced with a formal online inception workshop attended by more than 300 participants. The findings and data collected for the upcoming 12th Malaysia Plan (12th MP) and the SDG Indicators Malaysia 2019 report are also utilised in the VNR 2021. Following the improvement in data collection, the VNR 2021 will provide a more comprehensive evidence-based data as compared to the first VNR in 2017.

National Key Achievements and Progress

Malaysia has successfully transformed its economy, raised living standards, and moved from a low-income to an upper-middle-income economy within a generation. The gross national income (GNI) per capita, expanded about 29-fold, from US\$347 in 1970 to US\$10,118 in 2020. Among the significant achievements are in **eradicating poverty and narrowing inequalities as well as providing better quality of life for the people**. The incidence of absolute poverty reduced from 7.6 per cent in 2016 to 5.6 per cent in 2019. Hardcore poverty has almost been eradicated, though pockets among selected groups, and multidimensional deprivations remain. The COVID-19 crisis resulted in some vulnerable households within the B40 income group fell into higher incidence of poverty and widened the inequality. In response, the government has implemented a series of special economic recovery packages to boost growth and protect the vulnerable. Malaysia has also enhanced its food production, where the self-sufficiency levels of 10 major agri-food commodities continue to improve. However, the **nutritional aspect of food security** has become more pertinent as Malaysia faces double burden of malnutrition, particularly involving vulnerable groups and in times of unexpected emergencies.

Malaysia has been successful in providing quality, accessible and affordable healthcare, on par with those in more developed countries, based on the principle of universal health coverage. The country's health security preparedness was demonstrated by successfully managing the COVID-19 outbreak. However, health burdens are rising due to an aging population, demands for better healthcare, and the increasing NCDs, which currently is responsible for more than 70% of deaths. Initiatives to enhance the healthcare delivery system to promote a better and healthier lifestyle through a multi-sectoral nutrition framework are currently being implemented.

Malaysia is also making progress towards **sustainability** and managing **climate change** by adopting a resource efficient and climate resilient development model. The

sustainable consumption and production (SCP) approach was undertaken through creating green market, managing waste holistically, and increasing the share of renewable in energy mix. While various efforts are being made to better coordinate SCP, and climate change at the policy level, technical and financial support are still required in the implementation.

Malaysia continues to practice a unity in diversity approach, while emphasising **governance, social cohesion and partnership**. It is committed to South-South Cooperation through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme, supporting 144 developing countries through technical and capacity building initiatives. In addition, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on SDGs was established to enhance SDG localisation. The Voluntary Local Reviews have also been initiated to ensure local authorities' programmes and initiatives are in line with the SDGs.

Way Forward

Moving towards 2030, the national development priorities will continue to be aligned and integrated to the SDGs. The SDG Roadmap Phase 2 (2021-2025) will be formulated to advance the SDG agenda by identifying priority areas, key enablers and critical 'accelerator points' for lagging SDGs, ensuring policy coherence across all levels of governments, and recommending strategies and plan of actions. Localising SDGs initiatives will also be further strengthened. The 12th MP will ensure that the people will benefit from socioeconomic development, achieve inclusivity and social cohesion, and improve general wellbeing. Malaysia will advance green growth towards a low-carbon nation, ultimately attaining carbon neutral future. Effective execution of the 12th MP will contribute to achievement of the 2030 Agenda.