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Pfizer and MERCY Working Together for a Healthier Malaysia

Pfizer Malaysia and MERCY Malaysia collaborates to improve health literacy and provide basic health amenities to vulnerable communities and to raise disaster risk reduction awareness amongst younger generation

KUALA LUMPUR, 11th September 2013 – Country Manager of Pfizer Malaysia, Angel Choi, and President of MERCY Malaysia, Datuk Dr. Ahmad Faizal Mohd Perdaus signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to collaborate through the Pfizer's Humanitarian grant.

During the press conference held today at Pfizer Malaysia headquarter in Kuala Lumpur, Angel said that "Pfizer Malaysia is very excited about this partnership", which is the first collaboration between Pfizer and MERCY Malaysia.

The grant will be used to support sustainable health-related awareness program, by improving healthcare literacy within the indigenous communities in the Belum forest and to conduct disaster risk reduction programmes for school children throughout Malaysia for a year.

The collaboration between Pfizer and MERCY Malaysia will not only be limited to grant provision but also dedicating Pfizer's human resource to support some of MERCY Malaysia programme such as the Belum Forest Outreach Clinic. This will see colleagues from all over Malaysia volunteering under Pfizer's Local Health Fellows CSR initiative.

As part of this initiative, volunteers will apply their healthcare knowledge to educate and screen the Belum Forest community who have limited accessibility to healthcare given their remote location.

"Our partnership with MERCY Malaysia is not only about providing financial contribution but also about helping local communities to improve on health literacy and have better access to basic healthcare. Currently, members of the indigenous communities in the Belum forest have to take an hour's boat ride to reach the nearest clinic so it is important that they are empowered to take charge of their own healthcare," said Angel Choi.

SWAT (Sharing with a Touch)

With the goal of making an impact in the community we work for, Pfizer colleague's community committee also known as **SWAT** (Sharing with a Touch) has been focused for the last 5 years on creating a sustainable programme to assist this community by contributing their talent and time for a greater cause.

"Under SWAT's assistance, Pfizer staff members have gone through our Volunteer Induction Programme, by MERCY Malaysia and some of them have also undergone the Training of the Trainers (ToT) workshop. This prepares them as trainers for the School Preparedness (SPP) programme which is under our Disaster Risk Reduction initiatives," said Dato' Dr Ahmad Faizal Mohd Perdaus, President of MERCY Malaysia.

Through the ToT workshop, Pfizer volunteers were trained on disaster preparedness. The knowledge gained by each employee during the workshop empowered them to become facilitators in the School Watching Workshop, which is a component of the SPP where they assist MERCY Malaysia in educating school children on the importance of emergency preparedness.

"Thus far, 30 of our employees have been trained under this programme. We aim to see more than 500 hours of manpower support within the next six months, with the aim of benefitting approximately 1,000 people under these joint programmes," said Angel Choi.

"We are happy to have Pfizer on-board as one of our partners, and I am glad to see that the people at Pfizer have a strong spirit of volunteerism. Anyone could provide money, but it takes heart and compassion to want to volunteer," said Dato' Dr Ahmad Faizal.

"I am glad that Pfizer provided the platform and encouraged us to get involved in these community programmes, which basically reach out to the communities in which we live. As a facilitator of the SPP programme, I was enabled to enrich the lives of these school children by providing them with basic knowledge on the importance of being prepared should a disaster ever occur," said Grace, a volunteer under the DRR programme.

The MERCY Malaysia School Preparedness workshop was first implemented in 2008, aims to increase students' understanding on the importance of disaster preparedness, teaching students on the principles of risk and hazard mapping through simulation exercises.

During the workshop, students are taught to develop a practical risk and hazard map for their school, develop awareness raising materials and finally the students are encouraged to train other students and their family members after the workshop. Since it was first implemented, MERCY Malaysia has conducted 149 workshops, participated by more than 5000 students.

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About the Partnership between Pfizer Malaysia and MERCY Malaysia

Pfizer's partnership with MERCY Malaysia aims to improve the health literacy level amongst the local communities as well as raise awareness on the need for disaster preparedness training amongst school children, one of the vulnerable communities. This two goals will be achieved not only by Pfizer contributing financially but also getting its colleagues engaged through volunteering under two MERCY Malaysia programmes: -

1. The Belum Forest Outreach Clinic
2. The School Preparedness Programme (SPP)

About Pfizer Malaysia

Pfizer Malaysia is committed towards Working Together for a Healthier World™. We apply our global resources and strive to set the standard for quality, safety and value of medicines to improve the health and well-being of Malaysians at every stage of life. Our diversified health care portfolio includes human biologic, small molecule medicines and vaccines in Biopharmaceuticals. We also collaborate closely with public and private health care providers, and communities to support and expand access to reliable, affordable health care in Malaysia. Pfizer Malaysia began operations in 1964, and every day, some 350 colleagues throughout the country work to advance wellness and make a difference for all who rely on us.

About MERCY Malaysia

MERCY Malaysia is a non-profit organisation focusing on providing medical relief, sustainable health related development and risk reduction activities for vulnerable communities in both crisis and non-crisis situations. MERCY Malaysia recognises the value of working with partners and volunteers as well as providing opportunities for individuals to serve with professionalism. We uphold the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief and hold ourselves accountable to our donors and beneficiaries.

How is MERCY Malaysia funded?

To ensure independence and impartiality, MERCY Malaysia relies on donations from the general public for financial support. A portion of our income is obtained from institutional donors, individual government grants and other international organizations, which are given on project basis. MERCY Malaysia spends 80% of its income in carrying out its relief operations and support.