

United Nations Development Programme



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Honda Dreams Fund Launch

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25 April 2007
Glenmarie, Shah Alam, Selangor

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Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Honda Malaysia Mr Atsushi Fujimoto

Datuk Denison Jayasooria, Advisory Panel Chairman, representative from Suhakam

Dr Cecilia Ng, Advisory Panel Member, representative from AWAM

Distinguished guests

Members of the media

Selamat pagi dan selamat sejahtera kepada semua para hadirin sekalian.

On behalf of the United Nations Development Programme, I would like to thank Honda Malaysia Sdn Bhd, in particular Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Honda Malaysia, Mr Atsushi Fujimoto, for his confidence in UNDP.

It gives me great pleasure to participate in today's launch of the Honda Dreams Fund, a new private sector partnership between Honda Malaysia Sdn Bhd and UNDP. This is a milestone that we are proud of. UNDP, and a distinguished and successful multinational company in Malaysia, working together to help less fortunate students in Malaysia through our shared vision and common aim of making a real difference to the lives of underprivileged children.

Being the key generator of economic and technological development, wealth and jobs, business has always played a central role in the equation of poverty reduction. Today, more is expected from business than ever before, not only economically and technologically, but also socially and environmentally. The demands of customers, investors, business partners and employees reflect their growing social and environmental concerns. TV, radio and the Internet in particular are increasingly linking people and information across the globe, with impacts in one part of the world affecting reputations across the globe.

In Malaysia, there has been an increased momentum among companies to move forward a CSR agenda. UNDP Malaysia is supporting this agenda by engaging the private sector in support of national development priorities. UNDP seeks to build capacity of private sector employees to view development and environment issues from new perspectives and to get some convergence of cultures. And so we are delighted to be working with HONDA Malaysia.

Distinguished guests

UNDP is extremely encouraged by this exemplary commitment of Honda Malaysia to support this initiative – supporting underprivileged youths to fulfill their career objectives and subsequently their ‘dreams’ of a better life. This project the objective of improving equity and eradicating poverty, consistent with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which are at the forefront of national development aspirations across many countries.

Official data indicates that in 2004, an estimated 800,000 persons aged 15-39 did not have the opportunity to further their studies because of financial difficulties due to poverty.

Poverty is multidimensional and is often associated with lack of access to education and training. Providing access to underprivileged youths to further their education and improving their ‘employability’ will contribute towards improving their own social mobility, provides many beneficial effects for individuals, as well as having important positive externalities for families, communities and society..

This project is also consistent with the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006 - 2010) which outlines as one of its strategic thrusts “Empowering youths for the future through improved access to education and training.”

As part of the student selection process, UNDP and Honda held a three-day workshop in mid-April which focused on leadership, self-confidence and good values for 60 short-listed youths who were chosen from a total of 623 applicants. We had a tough time selecting the 20 successful recipients as all candidates were equally good and deserving in their own right. After much deliberation, we have made our decisions fairly and equitably. We are proud of the youths that we have chosen as this year's award recipients, and we are confident that they will go on to bigger and better things in life.

Thank you