

Date	Day	Monday	Date	21	Month	October	Year	2024
Publication	The Star							
Headline/Title	New mother tongue syllabus for pre-schoolers							
Page/Section	6/Star Education							
Compiled by	Group Corporate Communications							



THANKS to a new initiative to empower the community, Orang Asal pre-school teachers now have access to a curriculum that preserves and promotes the Semai, Jakun and Temiar languages and cultures in Malaysia through high-quality early childhood education materials.

Launched recently, the Empowered2Teach (E2T) Mother Tongue Syllabus comprises six comprehensive and age-appropriate themes which are Diri Saya (About Me), Keluarga Saya (My Family), Pekerjaan (Occupation), Kenderaan (Transportation), Haiwan (Animals) and Bunga (Flowers).

The Mother Tongue Syllabus, which includes teaching tools such as lesson plans, worksheets, arts and craft activities, songs, storybooks and thematic artwork, is a SUKA Society (Persatuan Kebajikan Suara Kanak-kanak Malaysia) milestone project developed to mark a decade since its E2T programme was introduced in 2014.

Developed in response to the lack of pre-school education among Orang Asal children, the E2T nationwide programme provides training, support and resources for the Orang Asal communities to start their own pre-school education classes within their rural villages.

Supported by the OSK Foundation, the E2T programme has seen the establishment of preschool and community classes and comprehensive teachers' training for the Orang Asal community.

New mother tongue syllabus for pre-schoolers

Initiative aims to promote Semai, Jakun and Temiar languages and cultures



Lovely smiles: Orang Asal teachers posing for a photo at the event.

E2T programme facilitator Zaliha Titoi said including each community's mother tongue in the curriculum empowers Orang Asal teachers and students to learn and teach in their own language, strengthening both education and cultural heritage.

SUKA Society executive director and founder Anderson

Selvasegaram said every child has the right to know and love their mother tongue, culture and tradition.

"Through this syllabus, we hope to create a strong sense of identity in these young children, and to help them build resilience and confidence in themselves from a young age."

Its CEO Cheryl Ong said OSK

Foundation firmly believes in the transformative power of education.

"As we recently celebrated the International Day of the Worlds Indigenous Peoples on Aug 9, we are proud to have the opportunity to help bring accessibility of the various Orang Asal languages to the Malaysian community as a way to bring aware-

ness to, and preserve their rich cultural heritage and identity," she said in a press release.

During the launch of the Mother Tongue Syllabus on Aug 17 at Perpustakaan Raja Tun Uda, Shah Alam, E2T teachers performed songs and stories and invited guests to explore the experiential booths and exhibits detailing the E2T programme journey.

The Mother Tongue Syllabus was also displayed, allowing guests to peruse the materials and books, as well as purchase storybooks in the Semai language.

Guests also tried their hand at guessing the animals based on their names in Semai and Temiar, learnt how the Orang Asal build a raft, and showed off their skills with a slingshot, while admiring their craft and handwoven tools on display.

Activities for children were held at the Children's Activity Corner during the launch, exposing and introducing elements from the syllabus to local children. Children were taught songs and stories from the syllabus, and shown how to weave headdresses from the Orang Asal's traditional outfit.