



THE CENTER TO COMBAT
CORRUPTION AND CRONYISM

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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“Over the past nine years, C4 Center has been at the forefront of calling out corruption and the individuals involved in graft, while being steadfast in its demand for accountable and transparent governance.”

DIRECTORS' MESSAGE

2023: A YEAR OF MISSED OPPORTUNITIES AND DISAPPOINTMENT

During the past year, the new 'unity government' repeatedly and strongly advocated the need for good governance, including by introducing strong anti-corruption measures. However, public reaction to this rhetoric of combatting corruption has been one of disappointment, even deep concern with the conduct of the unity government and where Malaysia is heading in its anti-graft endeavour.

Since coming to power in November 2022, the mantra of the unity government has been of the need to uphold good governance, a welcome initiative given that corruption is endemic in Malaysia. However, in spite of countless announcements about improving governance, most of these edicts have not been realized. Instead, the country was left stunned when the Attorney General made the shocking decision to drop 47 criminal charges against Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi by way of a discharge not amounting to an acquittal (DNAA), although a prima facie case had been established against him. It was also disappointing to see politicians being appointed as directors of many statutory bodies. This had occurred after the Prime Minister had initially signaled an end to political appointments in government-linked companies (GLCs). These appalling acts call into question the credibility and commitment of the unity government in its fight against corruption.

Some notable legislative reforms were made by the government to improve governance and promote human rights, namely the amendment to the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia Act 1999, the Public Finance and Fiscal Responsibility Act 2023, amendments to the Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017, and the abolition of the mandatory death penalty. However, major anti-corruption measures such as legal amendments to ensure whistleblower protection, the establishment of an Ombudsman's Office, reforms involving the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), and the separation of the offices of the Attorney General and Public Prosecutor have not been implemented though all are urgently required in order to combat graft. The only legislative change that has potential to combat corruption is the amendment to the Companies Act 2016 to make beneficial ownership reporting mandatory. This reform is a significant move to unveil the individuals behind companies who exploit their position to profiteer through trading-in-influence or abuse of power. However, more needs to be done to help regulators enforce this law.

Over the past nine years, C4 Center has been at the forefront of calling out corruption and the individuals involved in graft, while being steadfast in its demand for accountable and transparent governance. Backed by a team of highly skilled and passionate individuals, C4 Center continues to produce high quality and impactful reports that showcase the many ways in which abuse of power, profiteering, and corruption have occurred. And, most importantly, we have persistently called for justice when those in power place their personal interests over fulfilling their duties to ensure the betterment of Malaysia.

We are confident that the C4 team will continue to produce high quality, accurate, and evidence-based reports. We trust that this team will continue to uphold the values on which C4 Center was founded. We wish the team a strong and impactful 2024 in the national fight against corruption.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



DR. EDMUND TERENCE GOMEZ

Chairman

Edmund Terence Gomez was Professor of Political Economy at the Faculty of Economics & Administration, University of Malaya. He specializes in state-market relations and the linkages between politics, policies, and capital development. He has also held appointments at the University of Leeds (UK) and Murdoch University (Australia) and served as Visiting Professor at Kobe University, Japan and at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Between 2005 and 2008, he served as Research Coordinator at the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), in Geneva, Switzerland. Other academic appointments include Visiting Fellowships at the Australian National University, Canberra and at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Denmark. He has written and published several books on politics, economics, and Government-Linked Corporations (GLCs).



CYNTHIA MANONMANI A/P MICHAEL GABRIEL

Founding Director

Cynthia Gabriel, is easily recognized as a key advocate of human rights and good governance in Malaysia and on the global platform. She was the recipient of the Anti-Corruption Champions Award 2022, a prestigious award conferred by the US Department of State. In June 2021, at a rare and exceptional invitation by the President of the United Nations General Assembly, Cynthia addressed the plenary of member states at their special session against corruption. Cynthia was appointed into the prestigious Global Future Councils of the World Economic Forum (WEF), on economic and anti-corruption issues for the term 2019-2020, an advisory body to the World Economic Forum, which meets every year in Davos, Switzerland. In 2020, Cynthia received a meritorious award by the King of Malaysia, for her outstanding efforts in fighting corruption and courage in advancing democratic freedoms in Malaysia and the region. Academically well-rounded, she has degrees in both the science and legal fraternities.



AZRUL MOHD KHALIB

A firebrand social activist who has dedicated his life to fighting for human rights and public health. He now heads a social policy thinktank called the “Galen Centre”. His previous positions include being a senior manager with the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) as well various positions in humanitarian organisations such as the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). As a writer, Azrul is a frequent columnist for the Malay Mail and China Press.



DATO' HJH. SUTINAH BINTI SUTAN

Dato' Hj. Sutinah binti Sutan started her career in the Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) on June 1980. Throughout her decades of service, she quickly moved up the ranks as she dedicated her life to preventing corruption. She was formerly the Deputy Chief Commissioner (Prevention) of the MACC from 2010 until her retirement. She is involved in numerous local and international taskforces and committees that promote integrity including the National Integrity Committee on Public Governance as Chief Secretariat, Integrity Committee on Policy, System and Procedure, the National Integrity Plan, the MACC Oversight Group, the South-East Asian Anti-Corruption Pact (SEAPAC), ADB-OECD Anti-Corruption Initiatives for Asia and the Pacific, and the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities. Dato' Hj. Sutinah binti Sutan holds a Bachelor Degree in Humanities from the University of Science Malaysia.

CEO'S MESSAGE

"We want to use innovative means to expose and unravel complex corrupt practices and encourage public interest and participation in combating corruption, as well as to generate public support for transparency in the governing of the country and to seek public participation in the business of governance"

PUSHPAN MURUGIAH CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

It is my pleasure and delight to introduce C4 Center's 2023 Annual Report, my first as the CEO, a position created in 2023. Since coming on board, the role and significance that C4 Center plays in the larger landscape of politics, economics and good governance has only grown more significant. The areas where corruption hides in subtle ways while heavily exercising its influence is something that C4 Center continuously works to unravel.

It was a daunting task to fill the shoes of an icon who has done so much in the fight against corruption nationally and internationally, Ms. Cynthia Gabriel, whose name is synonymous with C4 Center, and who has been at the forefront of combating corruption from the days of the Scorpene scandal to the infamous 1MDB scandal that brought down a ruling coalition which was in power since independence.

This gave us the motivation to work harder to further strengthen the work of the organization and to lead the organization to a new level of excellence. I have emphasized the need for innovation and creativity in producing hard hitting evidence-based research in areas where corruption is heavily entrenched within the system. This has led to some interesting and innovative examinations at the many types of corruption as well as the intersections between corruption and the various areas of public interest.

2023 ACTIVITIES

The year saw C4 Center's re-entry into the Coalition of Malaysian NGOs in the UPR Process (COMANGO). It was necessary for us as the leading anti-corruption NGO to showcase the many areas where corruption has an impact and to amplify the need to address corruption by establishing the links between corruption and everyday issues. In fact, many Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) may not be achieved if corruption as an underlying issue is not addressed at the societal, legislative, and policy level.

We also had extensive engagement with various ministries, namely the Ministry of Finance (MOF), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), and the Legal Affairs Division under the Prime Minister's Department. Our engagement with the MOF was to advocate for the legislation of a Government Procurement Act (GPA) that will serve to curb leakages and corruption within the public procurement sector. C4 Center has been heavily invested in driving the need for a comprehensive and equitable procurement act, which has also led to us collaborating with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to conduct a workshop for understanding the principles and processes behind public procurement targeted at journalists, the legal fraternity, CSOs, and the general public. UNODC further collaborated with C4 Center to carry out a conference and panel discussion on this subject with experts from around the world, including local experts from public universities. Our engagement with MOFA allowed us to introduce a new approach to identifying the intersections between corruption and human rights. C4 Center was also invited to conduct an introductory talk on corruption to MOFA officers.

We also conducted an Ombudsman Roundtable Discussion to understand the need to legislate on an

Ombudsman office. We are currently preparing a report on the challenges and benefits of an independent Ombudsman office to reduce government and civil service maladministration and abuse of power. We were also invited by the policy division of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission to discuss and prepare a road map for the continuation of the National Anti Corruption Policy 2019-2023 (NACP) to the newly minted initiative, the National Anti Corruption Strategy (NACS), in Melaka in June.

There has also been a significant increase with youth engagement through private and public universities. C4 Center was invited to conduct talks at Brickfields Asia College, Help University, Taylor's University, Nottingham University, and Monash University. These were also opportunities for us to introduce our card game, Build My-Town (BMT), which educates players on how a parliamentarian conducts their work and how dirty money contributes to corruption. In a big step forward in C4 Center's visibility, our card games can now be found in major game stores and bookstores.

C4 Center is proud to announce that we published our first book titled *State of Corruption: Power, Politics and Policies in Malaysia*, available for sale in major local bookstores as well. It is an introduction to the history of how the nexus between business and politics was cultivated throughout Malaysia's history post-independence, the methods of corruption that are practiced within the Malaysian ecosystems, and how grand corruption continues to be perpetuated using the various tools and policies available to politicians and business elites.

REGIONAL PROGRAMS

C4 Center took the initiative to conduct regional programs to highlight the nature of cross-border crimes. The need to understand cross-border crimes and form strategic alliances to counter and expose profiteering and corruption is an important aspect of the continuous fight against corruption. With the exposure of the Panama and Pandora Papers, it is evident that the scourge of corruption cannot just be viewed from a national and local lens but from an international perspective as well. This included our launch of two very important preliminary reports on illicit cigarette smuggling and corruption in the recruitment of

migrant workers. Experts from local universities, the private sector, and enforcement agencies were invited to share their experiences alongside international experts who contributed to a rich and interesting conversation.

We also conducted a workshop on the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) and were grateful that the UNODC Vienna office sent a representative to explain the contents and principles behind UNTOC and the need to establish a review mechanism within the ASEAN regions to monitor compliance within each country.

We also were invited to attend the regional meeting of the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA) in Vietnam, where C4 Center provided input on corruption and the plastic waste industry as well as environmental governance issues in general.

It is also important to note that C4 Center was appointed to the consultative panel on the Climate Change Act to drive legislation that will make a significant impact on national climate change policies through our contribution and insights.

INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION

C4 Center was fortunate and grateful to the United States government and to UNODC for the invitation to participate in the tenth session of the Conference of State Parties in Atlanta, Georgia. I was also invited to speak on two panel sessions that discussed the topic “Exposing the hidden links: Corruption and Human trafficking” and “Collective Action: Holding the Executive to Account.” It was an opportunity to carry our voice to a larger international audience on the Malaysian experience.

It was an honour to speak alongside so many distinguished speakers such as Ahmed Shakeel Ahmed Shabbir, a dedicated Member of Parliament and Chair of the African Parliamentarian Network for Anti-Corruption (APNAC), and Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) representing Kenya; Tom Melia, the Senior Foreign Policy Advisor to Senator Ben Cardin, Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; Carmela Siapno Fonbuena, the Executive Director of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ); Kristen Robinson,

Head of Advocacy at the Open Contracting Partnership (OCP); Ambassador-at-Large Cindy Dyer (United States); Professor Luz Estella Nagle (Stetson University); Rebecca Miller (UNODC) and esteemed diplomat Claudio Nardi (Liechtenstein).

LOOKING FORWARD - 2024

2024 looks to be an exciting year for C4 Center and myself as we have planned many innovative programs and initiatives to further strengthen the fight against corruption. To help us navigate this new road, we have new members who joined C4 Center throughout 2023. The team comprises a pool of young, critical, talented, but most importantly, passionate individuals dedicated to combating corruption.

C4 Center is also proud to share that we are an organization that practices DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) initiatives as part of our organizational values and culture. Unity in diversity is a strong force that allows for diverse opinions and ideas to take shape to better allow us to innovate responses and initiatives to combat corruption.

We will further uphold the principles of good governance - CLEAN, COMPETENT, CONSCIOUS and CREDIBLE in our work philosophy.

Finally, I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their invaluable advice and support in our initiatives and who have been instrumental in assisting the organization during the transition period.

I wish the team a year filled with excitement and success, and look forward to working with everyone to realize our goals of a fair, transparent, equitable, democratic and corruption-free nation.

“Strength in Diversity”

Pushpan Murugiah,
Chief Executive Officer



THANK YOU STANLEY

Sudhagaran Stanley first joined C4 Center as a consultant based in Penang, which coincided with the launch of C4 Center's Northern Office in March 2016. He subsequently spearheaded operations there, recruiting members from the media to contribute in the fight against corruption.

He was promoted to Programme Manager in 2021 and made the move to C4 Center's main office in Petaling Jaya. In 2023, as part of the leadership transition process, he was appointed as our Deputy Chief Executive Officer. This ensured a smooth transition between the old guard to the new team as he carried with him the institutional memory of C4 Center's reform efforts, activities and engagements.

During his time at C4 Center, Stanley was involved in a wide array of advocacy efforts. He contributed to the 'Langkawi: Good Governance, the Pillar to a Successful Tourism Industry' report in 2018, and authored the 'MyGov Reform Tracker' report in 2022. He was also actively involved in the publication of our preliminary report, 'Unmasking Illicit Pathways: Investigating Corruption and Cross-Border Crimes in Malaysia's Migrant Labor Market' which was published in December 2023. He was also active in our engagement with other civil societies, government ministries and members of parliament in pushing for anti-corruption reforms.

Aside from his anti-corruption advocacy, Stanley has long been a champion of migrant rights and has been active in fighting for better rights and dignity for migrant workers and refugees.

It is with heavy hearts that we announce that Stanley is ending his time with C4 Center as he pursues new

and exciting challenges. In particular, he will complete his goal of pursuing a legal career by beginning his pupillage. Beyond that, Stanley has also embarked on providing consultancy and training programs to corporate clients as a certified trainer under the Human Resources Development Fund programme.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish him the best of luck in his future endeavours and thank him for his service to C4 Center and his dedication in pushing for reforms in our fight against corruption. We welcome his continued participation with us and our doors are always open for future collaborations with him.

Wishing him great success and happiness, from all of us at C4 Center.



RESEARCHERS





ARIEF HAMIZAN

Policy & Programme Coordinator

Arief leads research and advocacy on a broad range of reform issues, including whistleblower protection, freedom of information, political financing, and environmental governance. He holds an MSc Comparative Public Policy from the University of Edinburgh, graduating with distinction as a Chevening Scholar. His dissertation investigated the relationship between colonial land regimes and the construction of indigenous identity in Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore, and its impact upon policymaking following independence. Arief also holds an LLB from the International Islamic University Malaysia and completed his pupillage at a major Malaysian law firm, where he worked in corporate litigation with a focus on anti-corruption issues and government abuses of power.



SANGEETHA NISCINTA NANDINI

Research Officer

Sangeetha's primary focus area is the business-politics nexus, identifying issues of corruption, abuses of power, and cronyism. Currently, she researches governance and transparency issues within the administration of Federal Lands. Beyond this, Sangeetha also leads C4 Center's community outreach initiative through the organisation's 'Build My-Town' card game.



PRISHANTH LINGGARAJ

Policy & Legal Research Officer

Prishanth advocates for legal reform through an intersectional lens, identifying gaps which allow for the perpetration and perpetuation of corruption as well as measures to uphold good governance. His focus areas include ombudsman institutions, whistleblower protection, right to information, and the autonomy of domestic oversight institutions. He has a particular interest in the intersection between human rights, international law and corruption, leading C4 Center's involvement with the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).



NABILA SYUHADA ZULKEFLEE

Environmental Research Officer

Nabila advocates for the reform of Malaysia's environmental governance framework, with particular focus on its connection to corruption. She has contributed to several major research projects with the organisation, including a reevaluation of Malaysia's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) framework, the mismanagement and corruption scandals associated with Government-Linked Companies (GLCs), and international plastic waste trade issues.



BRYAN CHEAH

Research Officer

Bryan is a law graduate from the University of London external programme, and has had prior experience working for a human rights organisation as well as for a university research centre, focusing on drug policy and prison reform amidst COVID-19. Bryan's current areas of research in C4 Center cover COVID-19 pandemic and governance issues related to the transparency of public procurement of healthcare services.

ADMIN TEAM





FARHANA BAHARIN

Finance and Administrative Officer

Farhana has dedicated several years to supporting programs, financial management, and administrative tasks at C4 Center. She completed three years of studies in Accounting and has worked in the corporate sector for nine years before joining the organization. Farhana also handles the administrative works at C4 Center. She is a mom who during her free time enjoys outdoor activities such as camping and hiking with her boys.



WONG SI PENG

Events and Project Officer

Si Peng has been a professional event manager for over 20 years overseeing corporate events in various industries ranging from IT, pharmaceutical to automobile organizing product launches, international and regional conferences, award ceremonies and sport events such as marathons and fun runs. She is also a qualified scuba diving instructor with the aim of training safe new divers with appreciation towards marine conservation. In her free time, she organises beach clean-ups, volunteers for coral surveys monitoring the health of Malaysia's coral reefs and shark conservation awareness programmes.



ASYRAF ABDUL SAMAD

Social Media and Campaigns Officer

Asyraf graduated with honours from Limkokwing University with a degree in Broadcasting and Journalism, and has worked for several news organisations in Malaysia, including the New Straits Times and The Star. He previously co-directed a documentary film about the struggles of government hospital cleaners in Malaysia, which was screened at the Freedom Film Festival in 2019.





NEW BEGINNINGS

C4 CENTER STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING 2023



The team went for a 2-day meeting to discuss C4 Center's new plans of action for the year 2023.

C4's new acting CEO Pushpan Murugiah briefed the team on his new ideas for the organisation while recently appointed Deputy CEO Stanley Sudhagaran was the event facilitator. Each officer shared their goals and projects for the year with the rest of the team.

C4 Center's esteemed board members like Prof Terence Gomez, and Dato' Hj. Sutinah and Cynthia Gabriel shared their experiences and the history of C4 Center. It was an uplifting two days filled with knowledge, memories and positivity.

MOVING OFFICES & AN OFFICE WARMING BUKA PUASA

For many years, C4 Center's office was situated at 8 Avenue in Petaling Jaya, well-known for its congregation of many high-profile non-governmental organizations in Malaysia. We shared the area with many friends with whom we shared experiences of fear, frustration and joy together as a collective of concerned individuals in seeking for the betterment of Malaysians, recalling the numerous times we stood in solidarity when one of our number faced intimidation or harassment.

In 2023, the team made the decision to transition to a new location to accommodate the increase in our

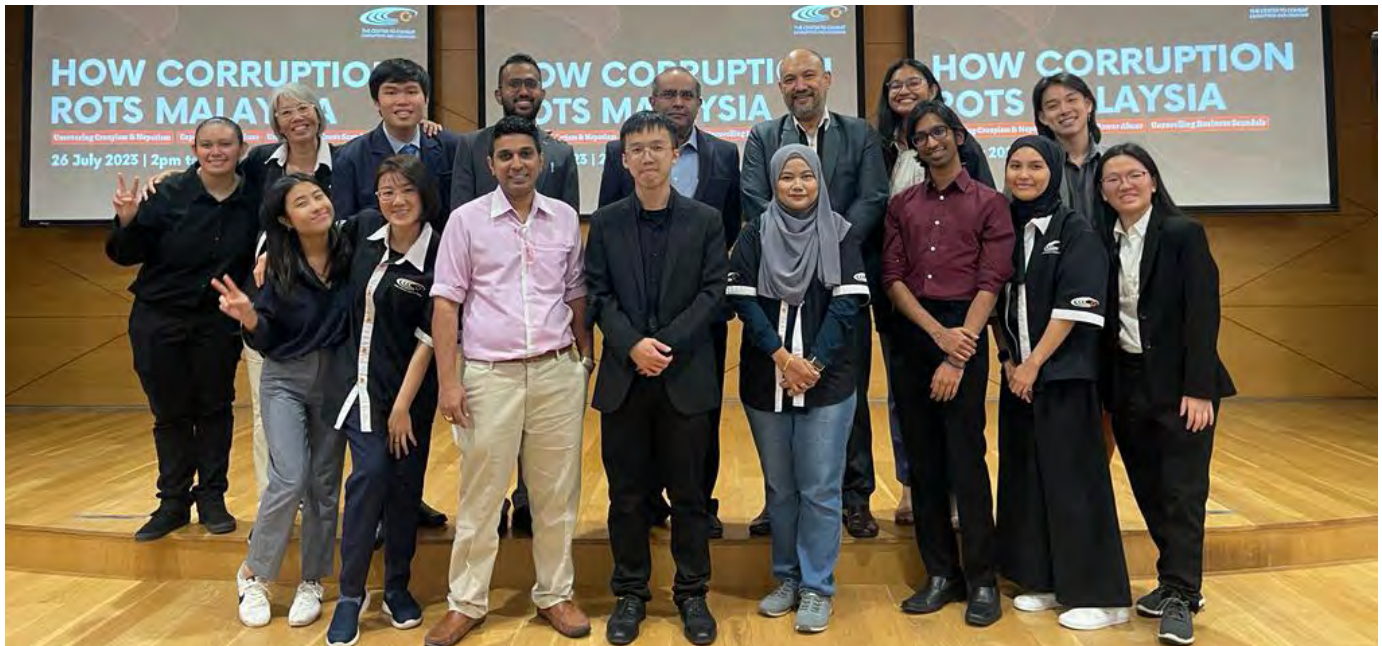
activity and areas of work, as well as the increase in manpower. C4 Center was embarking on a new journey with new team members and leadership and it was an opportunity to create a fresh environment for the team to innovate and to be creative in advocating for good governance and anti-corruption initiatives.

The new office is located in Section 16, Phileo Damansara 1, Petaling Jaya in a comfortable and spacious office, close to public amenities. We conducted our office warming and buka puasa celebration in May. The occasion was graced by friends from civil society and the members of our Board of Governance.

We hope that the new environment will add fuel to our team's motivation to strive in delivering the hard-hitting, evidence-based research and advocacy projects that C4 Center has always been known for since our early days at 8 Avenue, such that we can make a difference.



C4 CENTER CHAIRMAN, DR. EDMUND TERENCE GOMEZ TALK: *How Corruption Rots Malaysia*



Following months of rigorous research and fact-finding from years of analysing the setup of the system, the Center to Combat Corruption & Cronyism (C4 Center) revealed alarming evidence of systemic corruption within the government's institutional governing structures to a crowd of close to 100 participants at a public talk on Wednesday (26 July 2023).

Conducted to provide a clearer understanding of the systemic corruption problem in Malaysia, the talk presented patterns of corrupt acts occurring within the government system using simple data visualisation tools and tables.

Held at the AICB Centre of Excellence (ACE) in Kuala Lumpur, the public talk titled 'How Corruption Rots Malaysia' featured C4 Center chairman Dr Edmund Terence Gomez, who covered the extent of corrupt practices that have pervaded various levels of the country's governing institutions dating all the way back to the 70s.

The talk aimed to encourage public participation in discussions pertaining to existing and future legislation that must be urgently enforced as well as the dire need to immediately reform the institutional structure and administrative framework. The complexity of the nature of large-scale corruption, has for long, deterred public understanding towards the issue.

C4's findings included case studies of corruption scandals reported during the premiership of past prime ministers; rampant abuses by those in power using national institutions, public policies, statutory bodies and government-linked companies (GLCs); economic losses and social impacts resulting from corruption scandals.

One of the event's key takeaways was the need to redefine the narrow view of corruption and extend the definition to include enablers of corruption such as nepotism, cronyism, patronage and conflict of interest within the wider definition of corruption.



ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

ON THE PROPOSED MALAYSIAN OMBUDSMAN

In creating a proposal report for structuring the Malaysian Ombudsman (an Office meant to replace the Public Complaints Bureau, to be tasked with monitoring the resolution of public maladministration), C4 Center organised a roundtable discussion with other CSO representatives and academics to discuss novel proposals regarding the possible structure and functions of the Ombudsman in terms of their feasibility, efficacy and applicability within the Malaysian legal framework.

The creation of an Ombudsman office in Malaysia is a welcome addition to the overall framework of oversight mechanisms within the state, but must be done in a manner reflecting international best practice. C4 Center believes that the present Government has the

opportunity to revolutionise administrative oversight in Malaysia with the introduction of the Ombudsman.

Thus, this roundtable discussion sought to create a space for collaboration and sharing of ideas regarding these proposals. The opinions and expertise of others working on issues of anti-corruption and governance were instrumental in fine-tuning these policy ideas and in addressing complications which could arise. Key areas which were explored include the intersection of the proposed Ombudsman with existing oversight mechanisms (e.g. the MACC, EAIC, and IPCC), the selection, appointment and removal process of Ombudsman members, and the functions, powers, and jurisdiction of the Ombudsman.



LEGAL AID PROGRAMME

IN COLLABORATION WITH SELANGOR STATE BAR COMMITTEE AND LEGAL AID CENTRE SELANGOR



As part of the mandatory 9-month pupillage period required for any person to be admitted as a qualified legal practitioner with the right of appearance in court, they must perform 14 days of legal aid services pursuant to Rule 10.06 of the Bar Council Rules and Rulings. C4 Center was engaged by the Selangor State Bar Committee and the Legal Aid Centre Selangor to receive 2 batches of 15 pupils each as part of their legal aid duties, and during their time with us, they were exposed to anti-corruption and good governance and the legal issues arising therefrom.

Every Wednesday for 14 weeks, the pupils underwent workshops on various topics relevant to C4 Center's mandate, such as whistleblower protection, government procurement, political financing, and environmental governance. These sessions were generally conducted by the research officers in a conversational and informal manner, in order to stimulate open and free discussions on the nuances of these often complex issues. The pupils were tasked with

conducting independent research to come up with solutions to some of the inadequacies in Malaysian laws which allow for the perpetration and perpetuation of corruption. They were also encouraged to voice out their own opinions and disagreements with any of the suggestions or ideas presented to them.

Both batches of pupils were also taken for a field visit to the Parliament in order to observe a parliamentary sitting in person. This presented them with the opportunity to see firsthand the way the Malaysian legislature functions, which would grant them a deeper understanding of the laws which form part of their day-to-day occupations.



It is C4 Center's hope that by providing this exposure to the pupils, they might be encouraged to pursue future careers focused on public interest issues – particularly legal reform.

3-DAY UNODC WORKSHOP:

Greater Public Procurement Awareness in Malaysia for Parliamentarians, Civil Society and Media

C4 Center in a joint collaboration with the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), organised a three-day Public Procurement Workshop. The main aim of the workshop was to educate a wide array of stakeholders — Parliamentarians, civil society organisations, members of the media — on Malaysia's procurement processes, including its flaws as well potential areas for reform. The secondary aims of the workshop were to gather feedback and perspectives from these stakeholders on their views on additional issues that need to be addressed in order to introduce

improvements into the procurement system and to synergise efforts across the board in the lead-up to the announced legislation of the Public Procurement Act.

Over the three days of the workshop, panellists were invited to present on multiple aspects of procurement and participants were invited to provide further input or have discussions about the points raised. The main issues raised on the first day were with regards to the existing laws and policies governing public procurement, the procedure involved, and the weaknesses in



SECTION 2 / C4 EVENTS

the existing procedures that enable corruption to take place — speakers invited from the Ministry of Finance greatly contributed to the overall understanding of this area. Additionally, the Malaysian government's budgeting process and respective Ministries' procurement processes were elaborated on. The discussions that took place highlighted that while there existed regulations on paper that sought to enable good governance in public procurement, there are still many vulnerabilities due to the lack of legal enforceability.

The second day of the workshop focused on the e-procurement system, access to information in the tender process and for the public, and subsequently the technologies that could be introduced and implemented in order to overhaul the procurement system. It was identified that while e-procurement was a crucial element of Malaysia's procurement system, its implementation was not standardised across all states, and the information provided on online portals was insufficient in terms of guaranteeing transparency and oversight into tender notices and announced projects. Participants were asked to work in groups to discuss and provide suggestions on what a better e-procurement system would look like — the consensus was that tender notice information such as exact eligibility criteria, budget, duration of project, announcement of tender award and justification, etc. should all be included in an easily navigable platform. Additional discussions that took place regarding the prospects of introducing novel technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain into the procurement system to reduce human intervention and corruption were floated as well.

The third and last day involved looking to the private sector, examining how companies conduct internal procurements to identify points of emulation into government procurement — a speaker from a renowned multinational company was able to shed light on this matter, as well

as provide insight from the private sector's point of view regarding improvements to be made to public procurement as the government continues to engage the private sector. Finally, the workshop examined best practices from around the world, looking at how other countries have managed to improve their procurement system and deal with instances of corruption that may arise in these dealings.

One of the key takeaways was that many countries with robust and efficient procurement systems empowered oversight bodies to review, investigate, and provide remedies to injured parties as a result of flawed procurements, even in the absence of a procurement legislation.

From this workshop, C4 Center has managed to in-grain an interest in the subject of public procurement in multiple key stakeholders as well as address the urgency with which the flaws in public procurement need to be dealt with. Connections with individuals and organisations equipped with the skills and knowledge required to pursue a concerted effort in reforming public procurement were established. C4 Center's existing work and ongoing research on reforming public procurement will be presented to them at subsequent workshops and discussions to open more areas of discourse in directing the Malaysian government's plan to legislating the Procurement Act.



CRAFTING THE FUTURE OF MALAYSIA'S PUBLIC PROCUREMENT EVENT



C4 Center in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) organised the forum “Crafting the Future of Malaysia’s Public Procurement” on 18 September 2023. The primary aim of forum was to present C4’s Center’s Draft Policy Paper for the Malaysian Government Procurement Act and to collect feedback on how the final policy paper can be improved upon. The event gathered stakeholders from multiple sectors such as academics, members of civil society organisations, think tanks, government officials, and other professionals in the area of public procurement both locally and internationally to provide insight and suggestions into how the Malaysian Government Procurement Act might be constituted.

With procurement having long identified as being one of the main drivers of corruption in public sector corruption in Malaysia due to a series of legal and

institutional pitfalls, the draft policy paper identified five key issues that need to be addressed in the drafting of a procurement act. A brief summary of the discussion of each identified issue is as follows:

- **Ministerial powers** – Ministers both at the levels of Federal Ministries and State governments have wide powers in deciding how procurements within their departments and agencies operate due to being the de facto financial authorities and are able to appoint members of procurement assessment boards. Government-linked companies, many of which are contracted to oversee procurements, are also subject to Ministerial power as many of them fall under the control of Ministries. This section additionally suggests that procurement board officers are rotated frequently, and that asset declaration laws are introduced both for procurement officers as well as ministers.

- **Punitive elements against procurement officers** –

This section discusses the need for including punitive legal provisions in the proposed Procurement Act and ultimately takes a stance against a punitive approach to handling non-compliance to procurement procedure. It is argued that non-compliance is the result of organisational failures and a lack of institutional oversight, both internal and external, to proactively encourage compliance. Even in the case of intentional non-compliance, there are already existing laws and regulations that can be used instead of legislating yet another punitive law.

- **Information accessibility and transparency** –

The ability to access information at all stages of tendering is key to ensuring that procurements are conducted in adherence to good governance and that corruption does not take place. Malaysia's procurement system lacks transparency, seeing as information about tender awards and specifications are not made public, and the deliberations of procurement boards in making tender decisions are not published either. E-procurement systems are also inconsistently implemented with the categories of information wildly differing between each state e-procurement portal.

- **Grievance and remedy procedures** –

Malaysia's procurement system has little to no remedy systems in the event that a tenderer wishes to appeal a decision made by a tendering body. Existing options, such as by complaining to the Public Complaints Bureau or the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission are very limited in their application and are very situational. The option of judicial review is discussed but that, too, is limited in its application as it only investigates the exercise of power by public bodies based on procedure and not merit. It is strongly suggested that the procurement act establishes an independent body to review tender award decisions, such as a Public Procurement Tribunal.

- **Defence procurement** –

The area of defence procurement is highly prone to corruption due to its reliance on secrecy based on the grounds of maintaining "national security" as well as the high-level of expertise and specific knowledge needed to appreciate the subject matter. The use of direct negotiation here is also especially rampant, and has led to many cases of grand corruption. It is recommended here that defence procurement should be placed under the

oversight of a Special Ombudsman Office on Defence Procurement to assess government expenditure in this area, and that the proposed act should define the limits of national security being invoked to justify defence spending.

The presentation on the initial report findings was followed up by multiple panel sessions covering the different aspects and areas of possible reform for Malaysia's procurement process. The additional panel sessions and subjects were:

- **Session 2** – Discussion of C4 Center's Draft Policy Paper for the Malaysian Government Procurement Act

- **Session 3** – Challenges to Defence Procurement and Areas of Reform

- **Session 4** – Transparency, Access to Information, and Procurement Technologies

- **Session 5** – Review and Remedy: Seeking Justice for Flawed Tenders and Holding Public Servants Accountable

The numerous sessions resulted in input from all speakers spanning across issues from across the entire procurement process. Key inputs gained from these sessions will be incorporated into the final Policy Paper on Public Procurement or used to expand on existing discussions. Overall, this forum was instrumental in connecting the C4 Center team with subject matter experts for the purposes of expanding our own expertise, as well as being able to touch base with representatives from the Ministry of Finance to ascertain their own progress in drafting a Government Procurement Act. It is anticipated that the final Policy Paper on Public Procurement will be presented to the government and other interested stakeholders once completed.



ASEAN FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE: *Addressing Cross-Border Corruption and Transnational Crime*



A 2-DAY ASEAN CSO NETWORKING & ADVOCACY STRATEGY CONFERENCE

Held in Penang on the 5th & 6th of December 2023

Aligned with the visionary spirit of Article 13 of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), C4 Center orchestrated the “ASEAN FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE” (AGG) Conference in December 2023. Over two enlightening days, the conference assembled an array of civil society luminaries dedicated to combating corruption and advancing governance within the ASEAN region. This gathering served as a vital platform for these leaders to exchange invaluable experiences and deliberate on strategies aimed at confronting the formidable challenge of cross-border corruption. Recognizing the intricacies of this issue in such a diverse and interconnected region as ASEAN,

participants engaged in robust discussions aimed at fostering collaborative solutions.

At the heart of the conference were two meticulously crafted research papers, each shedding light on pressing issues within the region. One paper delved into the illicit smuggling of cigarettes across borders, while the other examined the exploitation of migrant workers through corrupt recruitment processes. Esteemed panelists from various sectors, including law enforcement (PDRM), the private sector (Sime Darby Malaysia), academia (University Sains Malaysia), advocacy groups (Prakarsa Indonesia & Migrant Forum in Asia), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), lent their expertise to critically evaluate the preliminary findings of these papers. The ensuing dialogue not only enriched



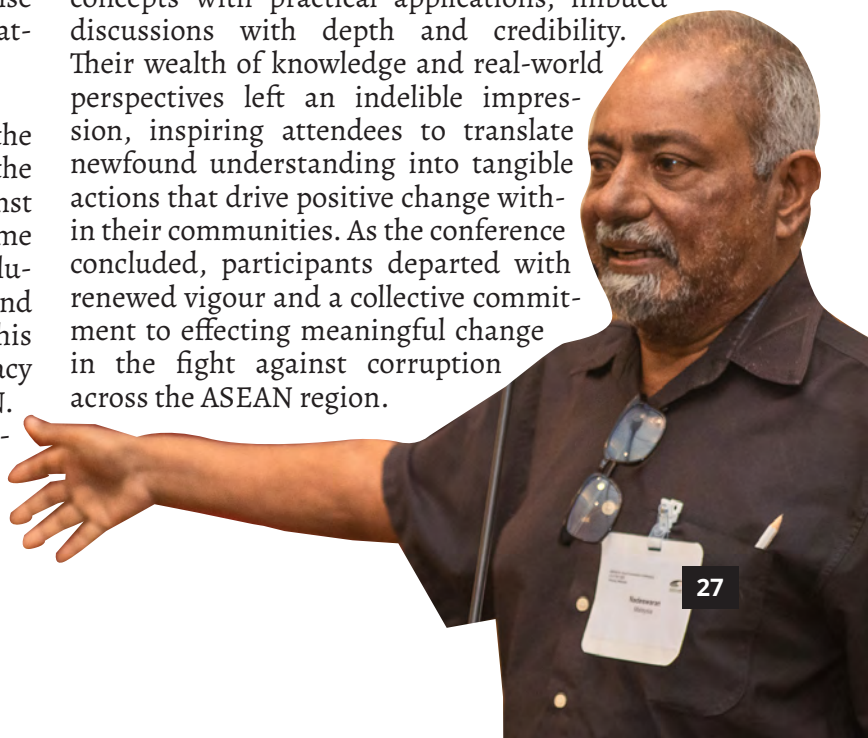
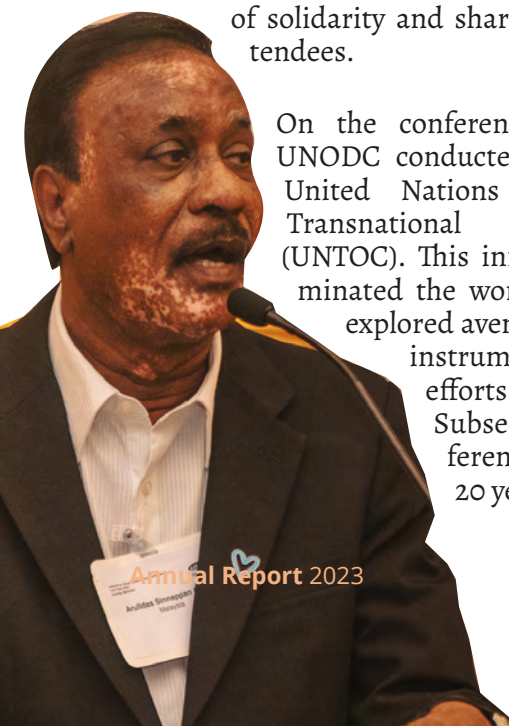
the research but also set the stage for their enhanced publication in 2024.

Participants hailing from Indonesia, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Malaysia seized the opportunity to share their advocacy endeavours and provide insights into their respective country's circumstances. This rich exchange of ideas facilitated a deeper understanding of the diverse challenges faced across the ASEAN region, fostering a sense of solidarity and shared purpose among attendees.

On the conference's second day, the UNODC conducted a workshop on the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC). This informative session illuminated the workings of UNTOC and explored avenues for leveraging this instrument to bolster advocacy efforts throughout ASEAN. Subsequently, as the conference commemorated 20 years of UNCAC, par-

ticipants engaged in discussions aimed at charting a collective path forward, underscoring the importance of unified action in addressing cross-border advocacy endeavors.

The resounding success of the conference was a testament to the enriching exchange of ideas and insights among participants from diverse backgrounds. The caliber of speakers, adept at bridging theoretical concepts with practical applications, imbued discussions with depth and credibility. Their wealth of knowledge and real-world perspectives left an indelible impression, inspiring attendees to translate newfound understanding into tangible actions that drive positive change within their communities. As the conference concluded, participants departed with renewed vigour and a collective commitment to effecting meaningful change in the fight against corruption across the ASEAN region.



KEY MEETINGS

MEETING WITH MPS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COVID AUSTERITY MEASURES IN REACHING THE GENERAL PUBLIC



The C4 Center team went to Parliament to do a briefing on the effectiveness of Covid-19 austerity measures in reaching the general public to a few MPs. This was in relation to our “COVID-19 and Governance: A Qualitative Study on Government Aid with Communities from Bentong, Pahang and Selayang, Selangor” report. The MPs who were present were:

- Datuk Seri Dr. Dzulkefly bin Ahmad, MP Kuala Selangor and former Minister of Health
- Yang Berhormat Kelvin Yii, MP Bandar Kuching,
- Yang Berhormat Syed Ibrahim Syed Noh, MP Ledang
- Yang Berhormat Young Syefura Othman, MP Bentong
- Yang Berhormat Syahredzan Johan, MP Bangi

The discussion was fruitful. This report can be used to contribute to actual ground data on readiness preparation for future crises, including improving governance and aid delivery mechanism.

GROUP DISCUSSION ON BUDGETING WITH THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE



C4 Center in its quest for good governance suggested the following budget considerations;

1. To increase allocation to realise the implementation of the NACP due this year.
2. Sufficient funds must be made available in line with the proposal to separate the AG and PP functions.
3. Consideration for further allocation on MACC reforms in terms of increased funding for staff and the short-term measure to place MACC under the preview of Parliament.
4. Funds to streamline the procurement processes with technology and the passing of a procurement act to regulate public procurement.
5. To seek clarification on government policy on Private Finance Initiatives (PFI), as PFIs do not fall under public procurement or treasury directives and will have a significant economic impact in terms of debt in the long run. We request more transparency in reporting this.
6. We also seek more transparency in the valuation process of assets of 1MDB that is being repatriated back to Malaysia. We do not wish to be short-changed in regards to the value due to collusion or weak negotiations.

MEETING AT PARLIAMENT WITH RASUAH BUSTERS



C4 Center's Board of Directors, Dr Terence Gomez and Cynthia Gabriel were at the Parliament with Rasuah-Busters. They provided an overview of the areas of anti-corruption reforms they are championing to emphasise the importance of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) Malaysia structure.

The Parliament Speaker supported our efforts and assured us that he would work with us to get this moving. He will assign a staff for us to deal with on all matters.

The creation of APPGM defines the function of the APPG as a forum or platform for MPs of the Dewan Rakyat and Senators of the Dewan Negara and also includes external partners such as academics, NGOs (Non-Government Organisations), professionals and specialists to discuss, research and present a report of recommendations on various themes and issues to parliament and its committees.

MEETING WITH BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION

A good meeting with the British High Commission. We shared some of our focus areas moving forward



and our perspective on how we could engage the unity government. There were also discussions on areas where we could work together to strengthen our institutions and reform agenda.

MEETING WITH YB SYERLEENA ABDUL RASHID



A great meeting with YB Syerleena Abdul Rashid as we discussed important issues on reforms. We also spoke at length about youth engagements and how we could engage them on institutional reforms, we further touched on how our card game, Build My-Town can play an important role in bridging the gap between young voters and understanding the role of an MP and reforms in affecting change.

PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP MALAYSIA (APPGM) AT KARANGKRAF



Dr Edmund Terence Gomez and Cynthia Gabriel, members of the Board of Directors of C4 Center spoke at a press conference of the APPGM - Integrity, Governance and Anti-corruption held at KarangKraf.

SECTION 3 / KEY MEETINGS

Former Cabinet Minister Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar, APPGM Chairman Syed Ibrahim Syed Noh, Deputy Chairperson Mas Ermieyati and many others attended the program.

The press conference saw members of the APPGM (both government and opposition Members of Parliament) sitting alongside civil society representatives to discuss the measures needed to combat corruption in Malaysia. The continued democratisation of the legislative process via CSO involvement is a welcome improvement which C4 Center shall continue to strive for.

APPGM MEETING ON POLITICAL FINANCING



C4 Center attended the All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia (APPGM) Meeting on Political Financing at Parliament to call for political parties funding allocations to be included in the draft political financing legislation. The APPG comprises Members of Parliament from across the board and members of civil society organisations including C4 Center, IDEAS and the Bar Council.

The APPG also calls for an independent commission to oversee political financing, and proposes that it be done through a new independent commission, or for authority to be granted to the Election Commission (EC).

While regulating political financing is a low-hanging fruit and an initial step towards curbing corruption, Malaysia must also undertake a comprehensive institutional reform agenda ensuring the Political Financing Act is not another toothless law. C4 Center will continue to engage parliamentarians and the government on key reforms via various channels.

APPGM MEETING WITH THE LAW AND INSTITUTIONAL REFORM MINISTER

The All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia (APPGM) on Political Finance had a meeting with the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform) Dato' Sri Azalina binti Othman Said and presented our draft legislation on political finance to the Minister.



It is time Malaysia regulates the finances of political parties to weed out political corruption and hold political parties accountable. The APPGM delegation was headed by Chairman YB Wong Chen joined by other MPs in the Committee and civil society organisations including C4 Center, which is part of the APPGM.

C4 Center looks forward to engaging the government further on the need for a political finance law and calls upon the Prime Minister to give the utmost priority and importance to this reform area.

MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE TO DISCUSS THE DRAFTING OF A PROCUREMENT BILL

C4 Center attended a meeting with representatives from the Ministry of Finance (MOF) to discuss the drafting of a Procurement Bill. The MOF had extended an invitation to C4 Center as one of numerous civil society organisations consulted to provide initial input on the issues that need to be covered in legislating a Government Procurement Bill -- C4 Center has long advocated for the legislation of a Procurement Bill.

During the consultation meeting, C4 Center imparted the pressing need to create a procurement process that is more transparent and ensures access to pro-

SECTION 3 / KEY MEETINGS

curement-related information for all stakeholders in order to ensure a sufficient level of public oversight over government procurement which has conventionally been plagued with corruption. Some of the issues covered in further detail included the need for standardisation and legal enforceability of procurement protocol, defining and imposing limits on “national security” and “emergency” as a method to escape oversight, as well as the wide powers of Ministers in deciding how tenders are allocated in their respective ministries. C4 Center emphasised the need for good governance in the procurement process as a whole in order to ensure that services and infrastructure obtained for public utility are efficient and of sound quality and that politicians will not be able to abuse the process for personal gain.



C4 Center is currently in the process of working on a full report on the challenges that exist in Malaysia's procurement and the issues that need to be taken into account in the legislation of a Procurement Bill in order to be presented to the government.

“STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY: DIALOGUE ON POLITICAL FINANCING AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR REGULATIONS OF POLITICAL PARTIES”

On August 23 2023, C4 Center and the Bar Council, civil societies, and various NGOs held a discussion with international expert, Professor Fernando Casal Bértoa, to discuss incorporating core features paramount in a political funding bill into Malaysia's legislative context which is currently in Parliament's pipeline of a list of laws to be reviewed and debated in the fight against corruption in Malaysia.

Bertoa, Assistant Professor in the School of Politics and International Relations at the University of Nottingham (United Kingdom), presented “Strengthening Democracy: Dialogue on Political Financing and

Legal Framework for Regulations of Political Parties” and highlighted the success stories of the countries with whom he had worked for the enactment of political funding laws.



Following this meeting, consensus was achieved on the urgent need to continue pushing for institutional reforms, transparency, integrity, and fairness in democratic processes.

14-15 SEPTEMBER: STAKEHOLDER MEETING WITH MACC ON THE NATIONAL ANTI CORRUPTION STRATEGY, MELAKA

The National Centre for Governance, Integrity and Anti-Corruption (GIACC), which is now incorporated into the MACC as the National Governance Planning Division, was initially tasked with monitoring the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Plan 2019-2023 (NACP). The government has decided to review and rename the NACP to the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS). C4 Center, which was part of the consultative stakeholder sessions involved in the formation of the NACP, has been called again to contribute to a stakeholder meeting aimed at strategizing the anti-corruption plan moving forward.

C4 Center emphasized that the NACP was a well-thought-out and well-discussed policy strategy, and its intent and policies should continue under the new NACS initiative. The focus should remain on reforms and increasing transparency in the business of governments. C4 Center also provided input into areas needing immediate attention, including reforming the MACC, amending the Whistleblower Protection Act 2010, and implementing asset declaration requirements.

MEETING WITH EMBASSY OF SWITZERLAND TO DISCUSS AVENUES FOR FUTURE COLLABORATION



On 25th September, C4 Center was invited to the Embassy of Switzerland to meet with Deputy Head of Mission Ralph A. Stamm and Political Advisor Hugo Claus. The objective of this meeting was to explain the wide range of work that C4 Center does across various thematic focus areas, in order to explore potential avenues for collaboration moving forward. C4 Center is greatly appreciative of the interest which the Swiss Embassy has shown towards our efforts to promote anti-corruption and good governance in Malaysia, and we hope to be able to build a lasting working relationship with other nations in doing so as well.

CLIMATE CHANGE CONSULTATIVE PANEL MEETING AND APPOINTMENT CEREMONY BY NRECC

On September 25th, C4 Center was appointed to one of the Climate Change consultative panels by the NRECC. We are honoured to have been selected as part of a group of twenty-four other non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), indigenous people's organization (IPOs), and civil society organizations (CSOs) to gather holistic perspectives and inputs on climate change issues in relation to the creation of a Climate Change Act that is slated to be tabled in 2025.

From this point forward, the panels are invited to participate in roundtable discussions and are responsible for the following:

1. To provide perspectives and input on climate change based on issues and requirements,
2. To propose new initiatives or partnerships to support the nation's climate change agenda.
3. To assist in enhancing the efficacy of educational activities and public awareness to combat climate change
4. To serve as the mediator in establishing co-operation with various parties, including the



community, the media, and the appropriate stakeholders.



This appointment marks an excellent step for C4 Center to contribute our views and principles to creating the crucial and long-awaited Climate Change Act as we strive for better environmental governance in Malaysia.

CSO STRATEGIC MEETING FOR SARAWAK'S CARBON MARKET INITIATIVES



On November 1st, C4 Center attended the second CSO Strategic Meeting conducted by Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM). This is the continuation of the meeting that was previously convened in Sarawak, which aimed to strengthen the discourse of actions by the Sarawak-based CSOs to denounce the state's major investment in Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) and Carbon Capture, Utilisation, and Storage (CCUS) initiatives.

Among these is a massive CCUS project under development by Petronas, situated approximately 200km away from the coast of Bintulu, Sarawak. In addition, Sarawak has also amended its State Land Code to incorporate carbon capture components and has successfully passed a new Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emissions) Bill, in which one of the initiatives of the Bill is to promote carbon capture and storage (CCS). This shows that Sarawak State is keen to spearhead the carbon market despite the fact that the federal government has not yet implemented any regulations.

However, according to the sharing session on Carbon Capture presented by Grant Hauber, an advisor from the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA), CCS is a costly and unproven technology that distracts from global decarbonization efforts while allowing the oil and gas industry to conduct business as usual. The CCUS projects are cause for concern because of the failures observed in previous CCUS plants in countries including the Netherlands, Australia, and the United States. These issues include inadequate CO₂ capture rates, gas leaks, and induced seismic activity, among other complications.

Therefore, the meeting reached a consensus to challenge the prevailing narrative on the carbon market and highlight its adverse environmental and social impacts on developing countries. As a result, SAM is preparing this memorandum for the Sarawak State Government regarding the risks associated with the carbon market development, which is slated for early 2024 and has the support of all participating CSOs. In addition, due to the novelty of the carbon market in Malaysia and the absence of feasible studies and federal regulations, the system could be at risk of corruption, which will be a major issue in the upcoming years. Therefore, C4 Center will proceed with our investigation with a new aspect that will identify the corruption risk in carbon credits in Malaysia.

PARTICIPATORY: TALKS & CONFERENCES

THE 2ND SUMMIT FOR DEMOCRACY

C4 Center's Founding Director, Cynthia Gabriel was invited to attend and speak at the esteemed Summit For Democracy in South Korea from 29- 30th March.



It is a high-level summit hosted by the South Korean government and C4 Center is extremely proud of Cynthia representing us on a panel that looked into financial integrity, both from a national and global perspective.

Some of the key points that were highlighted are the 1MDB case study on financial integrity, IFI and asset recovery.

CSO PLATFORM'S 100 DAYS OF THE UNITY GOVERNMENT OF MALAYSIA REPORT LAUNCH

The CSO Platform for Reform, a collective of 60 civil society organisations (CSOs) in Malaysia, released its report on the first 100 days of the "unity government". C4 Center is a member of the platform and C4 Center was represented by our Acting CEO, Pushpan Murugiah.



The report looks into the Malaysian political landscape in recent years and stresses the need for serious institutional reform. The aim of the report is to propel both the people and the government towards a nation

that embodies sustainability, stability and good governance. C4 Center remains committed to engaging with the government towards achieving meaningful reforms and changes that will benefit the people.

'CORRUPTION AS AN ECONOMIC PROBLEM' FORUM

The C4 Center team attended the 'Corruption as an Economic Problem' forum hosted by Agora Society Malaysia, Universiti Malaya Students' Union and RasuahBusters.



It is the first public lecture series of the Corruption-Free Generation with renowned speakers such as C4 Center's Chairman Dr. Edmun Terence Gomez, Dr. Michael Jeyakumar Devaraj, Mr. Adrian Pereira, and Dr. Melati Nungsari.

It was an interesting session as a wide range of topics were covered and discussed in particular on the different aspects corruption play in our society.

THE LAUNCH OF MALAYSIA RACISM REPORT 2022

C4 Center's Acting CEO Pusphan Murugiah attended the launch of the Malaysia Racism Report 2022 by Pusat KOMAS.



He articulated that racism within affirmative action policies could also be a prelude to corrupt practices. The implementation of affirmative action policies should also be transparent to promote accountability.

“35 YEARS OF EIA IN MALAYSIA, WHAT IS NEXT?” FORUM

C4 Center’s environmental researchers attended an EIA webinar titled “35 Years of EIA in Malaysia, What Is Next?” on March 21, 2023. The webinar highlighted the EIA process and its significant changes over the past 35 years.



This was part of our research into EIA legal and environmental governance projects. A functioning legal structure that allows public participation in the decision-making process is important to reduce and manage environmental damage.

ANTI-CORRUPTION AND ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING COURSE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY IN MALAYSIA

Environmental Research Officer Nabila Zulkeflee attended the “Anti-Corruption and Anti-Money Laundering Course for Civil Society in Malaysia” workshop hosted by IDEAS Malaysia, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), and CEELI Institute.



This was part of the 101 Course for Civil Society Course Introduction in which civil society actors in Malaysia gain foundational knowledge on how to effectively advance greater integrity and accountability in anti-corruption and anti-money laundering structures within government, judicial, civic, and private sector structures.

It was a very knowledgeable workshop with renowned speakers such as Karen A. Greenaway (ex-FBI), Alissa Rode (Research Manager from Ideas), Rahayu Mumazaini (Legal Expert), Cynthia Gabriel (C4 Center Founding Director), and many more on anti-corruption issues both in Malaysia and internationally.

UNODC MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE SESSION ON “LIABILITY OF LEGAL PERSONS FOR CORRUPTION OFFENCES IN MALAYSIA”

Following a research project on the regulatory and institutional framework and capacity to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate corruption cases against legal persons under Section 17A of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009, the UNODC held a roundtable dialogue session with non-governmental stakeholders, wherein the draft report was presented to attendees for comments and discussions. Areas of discussion included the stipulation of autonomous and successor liability of commercial or-

ganisations, elaborating upon the present Adequate Procedures Guidelines to assist commercial organisations with anti-corruption compliance, and the issue of sanctions. C4 Center was invited due to our extensive work in this area for our continuous advocacy in pushing for the strengthening of corporate liability in Malaysia.



This session sought to improve upon the current corporate liability regime regarding corruption offences in Malaysia by bringing together and encouraging discourse between representatives from corporate entities, trade unions, civil society, and academia. The draft recommendations were considered and improvements were suggested thereto, and all feedback raised during the dialogue was to be incorporated into the final report of the UNODC.

C4 Center's presence at the dialogue session enabled us to provide our perspective on the various recommendations made, particularly on extending the scope of S. 17A to cover other categories of legal persons and the Adequate Procedures Guidelines.

C4 CENTER ADDING ANTI-CORRUPTION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVE TO ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AT GAIA ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL MEETING 2023

GAIA (Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives) held a regional meeting for members in Asia Pacific. C4 Center was one of the 122 member organizations from Asia Pacific. GAIA's three workstreams are zero waste, anti-incineration, and plastics, and the purpose of the meeting was to lay the groundwork for the formulation of a regional plan.

During the meeting, C4 Center shared the current environmental regulations, and corruption issues on plastic management. Members further shared about environmental legislation in other nations, current difficulties and best practices that we could capture

and incorporate into Malaysia's policies.



C4 Center aims to provide a new perspective on environmental governance by addressing corruption and poor governance within the environmental policies, procedures and regulations.

28 AUGUST: JUST TRANSITION DIALOGUE: ASSERTING COMMUNITIES' CONSIDERATION BY TREES AND EPSM AT HILTON, PJ.

A one-day event organized by Treat Every Environment Special (TrEES) and the Environmental Protection Society of Malaysia (EPSM) at which C4 Center and various representatives from environmental NGOs such as SAM, WWF, SUARAM, and others gathered to discuss the perspectives and impacts of the Malaysian community on the current energy transition.

The discussion focused on how the global energy transitions have impacted numerous vulnerable communities, highlighting the need for a just transition during the process. Learning from a project case shared by Dr. Vimala Vainy Pillai, lead researcher from TrEES, the communities' considerations during the implementation of an energy transition, in this case, a solar panel project in Malaysia were not taken into account by the developer or any government authorities. Dr. Kamala stated that the majority of innovations do not consider ground-level insights and that there is a lack of pre-project and post-project engagements with the surrounding communities.

This results in a lack of transparency and public participation during a major development, despite large projects needing to incorporate these aspects into their planning processes in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), considering that they fall under prescribed activities as stated under the Environmental Quality Act 1974 Section 34A.

Through this, we learn that there is a lack of institutional arrangements regarding policy issues, as the energy transition is still so new to Malaysia, which has always been an oil and gas producer country. Malaysia's implementation of a just transition will have numerous shortcomings without thorough plans. Thus, it is essential for the government to create comprehensive policies on the energy transition and update current legislation to incorporate more transparency and strengthen accountability. A safety net should also be considered for the affected communities, such as providing related skill training to the new job practices so they do not fall behind during this crucial transition.

In conclusion, C4 Center looks forward to the Just Energy Transition that will be implemented in Malaysia in accordance with the aforementioned needs and recommendations.

THE ROAD TO COP28

Climate Change Forum

On September 4, C4 Center attended a launch of Malaysia's advisory and consulting panel on the climate change forum organized by NRECC, which was attended by over 200 guests representing stakeholders from the government, businesses, NGOs, and members of the public.

The NRECC's current commitments announced by NRECC Minister Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad during the launch were the drafting of the Climate Change Act, the National Carbon Policy, the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Roadmap, the National Energy Transition Roadmap (NETR), to increase ecological forest, strengthen local communities, and enhance ranger programs, the commitment to keep 50% forest cover, and water security.

Malaysia has revised and increased our Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to an unconditional target to cut carbon emissions against Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 45% by 2030 compared to 2005 levels. And currently, our current greenhouse gas (GHG) emission in 2023 is 495.0 MT. We as a nation must take a holistic approach to meet this target, as it requires a complete mindset change from the government, society, and businesses to adopt new systems and create new value chains as we transition away from "business as usual" economies. During the panel

session on Achieving a Net Zero Future Through a Just Transition, Dato Sri Tai Hean Leng, Vice Chairman of the Sustainable Development, Climate Change Committee of the Federation of Malaysia Manufacturers, called for legislation to enable the implementation of carbon tax using ETS (Emission Trading System) for a specific sector such as steel, cement, chemicals, or energy, as possible immediate first steps.



Following a separate panel session that was focused on the topic of Natural Solutions Toward Mitigating Climate Change, C4 Center concurred with a statement made by Prof Emeritus Datuk Dr Asma Ismail, Chairperson of the National Planetary Health Action Plan, during the second panel session that Malaysia has fragmented governance that is slowing the process of mitigating climate change. To strive for better environmental governance, C4 Center also recommends the following to lessen the fragmentation mentioned:

- Conduct a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to ensure any potential environmental, social, and economic impacts from implementing these policies, action plans, or roadmaps can be addressed or corrected before the plans take effect.
- To be multi-sectoral with involvement from all stakeholders, ministries, state governments, and local councils, with guidelines for uniform reporting and monitoring of environmental impacts.
- Capacity building and training for businesses to ensure compliance and submission of accurate information are essential components in the governance of environmental reporting.

SECTION 4 / PARTICIPATORY

- Carbon valuation in Malaysia requires further evaluation and re-examination.
- Existing policies and plans (RMK12) must be re-aligned to ensure development and projects move towards the common goal of climate change mitigation, and this must be implemented at all levels of government, federal and state.



- Transparency, access to data, and environmental impact reporting enhance good governance as they enable public participation in monitoring impacts and development projects in their respective neighborhoods. Transparency is compulsory to safeguard citizen's rights to a clean and safe environment.

NRECC LEVEL MADANI ECONOMIC DISCUSSION SESSION BY NIK NAZMI BIN NIK AHMAD

On September 13, C4 Center was invited to attend NRECC's "Sesi Bicara Naratif Ekonomi MADANI". At this event, NRECC outlined its current environmental issues and the ministry's vision for the coming years to combat the triple planetary crisis. Following that, a dialogue session was held between the NRECC's representatives, including its minister, to gather feedback from the attendees in which the context will assist in the inclusion of NRECC in the Malaysia 2024 Budget, which the Prime Minister will present in October 2023.

NRECC focuses on five primary objectives: energy transition, low-carbon development, environmental protection, preservation and conservation of biodiversity, and responsible mineral development. Nik Nazmi then stated that the NRECC intends to amend the outdated Environmental Quality Act 1974 by including more compounds and penalties and incorporating new environmental concerns that have never yet been addressed under any local legislation

in Malaysia. The NRECC will also propose the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act (EECA) as a crucial component of the zero-emissions objective. In addition, the National Mineral Policy will soon be finalised in regard to rare earth elements, and the NRECC is planning to work on the carbon credit regulations.



C4 Center believes that the Malaysian budget on the environment should include a transparent and easily accessible comprehensive plan, as the issues discussed by NRECC have a significant impact on communities, such as the energy transition, for which we should advocate for a just transition. Additionally, the government must investigate and reevaluate the contentious carbon trading and REE extraction. So that Malaysia can pursue sustainability without jeopardising our natural resources, these regulations must be made more stringent and supported by research evidence. Consequently, C4 Center will continue to monitor the development of NRECC's mentioned commitments.

12 - 14 JULY: CSO WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE JUSTICE 2023



In 2023, Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) held a civil society organisation (CSO) discussion on community rights, climate justice and carbon markets in Kuching. C4 Center participated through our CEO, Mr Pushpan Murugiah, in this workshop.

This workshop, among others, discussed the various

challenges posed by carbon markets, net zero targets and other false climate solutions at both the national and international levels, in particular within the context of their impacts on forests and community land rights.

C4 Center contributed in terms of the discussion on potential corruption issues that will arise when implementing these initiatives and the need for a comprehensive governance structure that is transparent and provides for real climate justice.

Pushpan Murugiah was also invited as a panellist on a side-panel-session called “Tumpang Tanya” to discuss corruption in relation to climate justice.

“SLAPPED DOWN? SPEAK UP!” CONFERENCE ON STRATEGIC LAWSUIT AGAINST PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SLAPP) 2023



From 22-24th August 2023, Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) organised a conference on Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation (SLAPPs), which brought together various activists and CSO representatives to learn about and discuss the ways in which SLAPPs are used to silence and harass public interest advocates across the world. The conference involves speakers from across the globe to speak about their personal and national experiences with these sorts of repressive measures, and how they have worked to push back against them.

CEO of C4 Center, Pushpan Murugiah was present to share our experience with SLAPPs as well, where a Letter of Demand was served upon the organisation after the publication of a press statement which was critical of an acting Minister at the time. Various discussions took place among the participants in seeking to come

up with a strategy to combat the use of SLAPPs as a tool for repression against Malaysian activists. The beginnings of a loose anti-SLAPP coalition also were discussed, drawing from the experiences of the international speakers.

26 AUGUST: ‘CORRUPTION-FREE GENERATION 4TH PUBLIC LECTURE: POLITICAL FUNDING REGULATION AND CORRUPTION: AN INSTITUTIONAL PROBLEM’

In our presentation, we delved into the intricate ecosystem that allows grand corruption to thrive, shedding light on the political actors and government-linked companies that play a significant role in diverting national funds under the guise of development or policy.

To truly understand the magnitude of grand corruption, we must first acknowledge the web of collusion and secrecy that enables it. The interplay between politicians, bureaucrats, and business elites often creates an environment ripe for corruption. By exposing the intricate relationships and mechanisms through which corruption takes place, we can begin to dismantle this destructive ecosystem.

One of the key actors in this ecosystem is the political class. Politicians, driven by personal gain and power, often exploit their positions to siphon public funds for their own benefit. Their involvement in corrupt practices not only drains national coffers but also erodes public trust in government institutions. Unmasking these political actors is crucial for holding them accountable and breaking the cycle of corruption.

Moreover, government-linked companies, or entities owned or controlled by the state, play a significant role in facilitating grand corruption. These companies often serve as conduits for corrupt practices, allowing politicians to divert funds through complex financial transactions. Their involvement not only provides a veil of legitimacy to corrupt activities but also deepens the roots of corruption within the government itself.

To combat grand corruption effectively, we emphasized the need for stronger regulatory independence and mechanisms. Regulatory bodies, tasked with

overseeing financial transactions and ensuring transparency, must be shielded from political interference. Strengthening their independence and giving them the necessary resources and powers to investigate and prosecute corrupt individuals will be key in dismantling the ecosystem of grand corruption.

In addition, legislative measures targeting political financing are crucial in curbing grand corruption. Political parties and candidates often rely on private donations to finance their campaigns, creating potential avenues for corruption. By enacting laws that regulate political financing, requiring transparency, and setting strict limits, we can reduce the influence of money in politics and minimize the opportunities for corrupt practices.

Measures to break the ecosystem of grand corruption must be comprehensive and multi-faceted. It requires a commitment from governments, civil society, and individuals alike to hold corrupt actors accountable, promote transparency, and strengthen regulatory mechanisms. By unmasking the political actors involved, emphasizing the need for stronger regulation and independent oversight, and enacting laws to regulate political financing, we can pave the way for a more transparent and accountable system.

It is crucial that we not only acknowledge the devastating impact of grand corruption but also take concrete steps towards combating it. By targeting the root causes and enacting comprehensive reforms, we can dismantle the ecosystem that allows corruption to thrive, and pave the way for a brighter future, built on transparency, accountability, and sustainable development.

Public Lecture Series

Organiser: **THE C4 CENTER** | Event partner: **MAHA BALAKRISHNAN** | **gbm** | **KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG**

Theme 4:

Political Funding Regulation and Corruption: an Institutional Problem

DR FERNANDO CASAL BÉRTOA
Associate Professor, University of Nottingham

MAHA BALAKRISHNAN
Parliamentary Specialist

PUSHPAN MURUGIAH
Chief Executive Officer, C4 Center

Moderator: Andrew Khoo (Bar Council)

DATE
26 August, 2023

TIME
10 AM - 1 PM

Location
Raja Aziz Addruse Auditorium, Wisma Badan Peguam Malaysia

FREE ADMISSION REGISTER NOW

QR CODE

CABINET TALK WITH BAC LAW SOCIETY

On the 7th of September 2023, C4 Center was invited by the BAC Law Society to conduct a talk on the executive branch as well as give an introduction to the world of anti-corruption. The talk was titled “The Executive and the Control of the Government Ecosystem” and was presented by our CEO, Pushpan Murugiah. The content of the talk ranged from separation of powers, systemic corruption, power plays and many more.



The main purpose of this event was to engage with law students about their knowledge of corruption and anti-corruption as well as their understanding of how the executive branch plays a crucial role in combating corruption as well as to ignite the passion of upcoming law students to take a stand against corruption by learning the ways to push for laws and reforms!

The event was moderated by BAC Law Society’s President, William Tong and the speaker of the event was our CEO, Pushpan Murugiah. The students were engaged with the speaker and were having an active conversation about the presented topic. It was a successful event as the law students present were able to understand and get a glimpse of how important anti-corruption is.

As the event came to a close, a short sharing session was conducted by our speaker to gauge how the participants felt about it and the responses received were very encouraging. In short, the event was a resounding success.

CSO PLATFORM FOR REFORM TECHNICAL EXPERT WORKSHOP ON GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP REFORM

On 2nd October 2023, CSO Platform for Reform organised a Technical Expert Workshop titled “Advancing Governance Leadership: Building a Strong Foundation for Malaysia’s Progress” in partnership with Pusat KOMAS and supported by the European Union. This workshop brought together government representatives, civil society, and academics to discuss important reform proposals regarding political appointments to Government Linked Companies (GLCs) and statutory bodies, as well as the proposed Ombudsman office.



C4 Center’s Director Dr Edmund Terence Gomez was invited as the resource person on GLC and statutory body reforms, whereas C4 Center’s Director Cynthia Gabriel and Policy and Legal Research Officer Prishanth Linggaraj presented on the proposal for an Ombudsman office in Malaysia. After the foundational context was set out by the presenters, the workshop attendees began to discuss key issues and problems to come up with possible solutions and ways forward for the reform agenda in Malaysia.



C4 Center was instrumental in contributing the knowledge base upon which the subsequent technical discussions were based, leading to the compilation of several key reform proposals. Further, representatives from the Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Minister’s Department were also present at the workshop – which allowed for the government’s perspective to

also be incorporated into the discussions. In summary, C4 Center was able to facilitate comprehensive and in-depth expert discussions through the strength of our institutional body of knowledge.

CORRUPTION-FREE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Embassy of Sweden in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and His Excellency Dr. Joachim Bergstrom and KLSC-CI invited our CEO, Pushpan Murugiah to speak in a lively and engaging panel discussion on corruption-free sustainable development with other esteemed guests on 3rd November.



Sharing the stage with him and contributing their respective insights were Dato’ Mohd Hafaz Nazar, Director of Policy, Planning & Research MACC (SPRM), Manon Bernier, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative to Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei (UNDP Malaysia), Dr. Yasuhiko Matsuda, World Bank representative to Malaysia (World Bank Malaysia).

The discussion was about how corruption affects sustainable developments and how private sector and the government can look at ways, policies and initiatives to combat the systemic corruption. The discussion also looked at the impact of corruption on the small and medium industry players and the need to create a level playing field between SMEs, large corporations and Government linked companies. Private sector is key to driving economic progress and the government must ensure there is sufficient support and policies initiatives which are transparent, to nurture and grow these industries in a clean and sustainable way.

REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON ADDRESSING CORRUPTION AS A FACILITATOR OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS

C4 Center was invited to this conference by UNODC to participate in a regional dialogue on a new emerging topic. Although trafficking and smuggling of migrants and corruption are existing criminal concerns, there were limited discussions on how each facilitates each other. Understanding the intersection of corruption and other criminal elements is vitals in establishing a holistic approach to combating crime. Corruption in most instances acts as the oil that fuels the criminal activity. Corruption is the enabler for trafficking and smuggling to flourish and is a massive contributor to cross-border crimes. By understanding these intersections and how corruption plays a role, stakeholders can find more effective ways to disrupt or disassemble an efficient and ruthless system controlled by international syndicates.

The conference, looked at national experiences and how corruptions act as the facilitator. By combining the many different experiences and activities, a more comprehensive understanding of how corruption facilitates trafficking and smuggling within the ASEAN region allows for better measures to be discussed to further strengthen regional cooperation in combating trafficking and smuggling of migrants.

NORDIC DAY CELEBRATION 2023



Our CEO, Pushpan Murugiah was invited to the Nordic Day celebration organized by Sweden, Norway and Finland. It was great to meet new friends. It was not only an opportunity for us to celebrate the cultural diversity of our friends but to also catch up on the many initiatives and collaborations, mainly in combating corruptions. It was also an opportunity to

engage with other organizations, academics and the business community on how we can better work together to drive the anti-corruption agenda. The shared values and the commitment that we gather from the many participants signals the unified and global effort in fighting the scourge of corruption and the need to form ever growing alliances and friends in driving reforms and changes that can serve as a catalyst in driving economic growth and investor confidence.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INTEGRITY AND GOVERNANCE BY ADFIM

The Association of Development Financial Institution of Malaysia (ADFIM) invited our CEO Pushpan Murugiah to speak in an engaging panel discussion on integrity and governance with other esteemed guests on 5th of October 2023.



The opening address and integrity hard talk session was conducted by the former Prime Minister, YB Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, followed by numerous engaging panel discussions.



Our CEO was invited to share experiences from the civil society perspective on the importance of good governance and integrity within an organization. Mr Pushpan further elaborated the idea of institutional

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integrity in terms of organizations' objectives and structural independence in delivering national service and socioeconomic development and the role of financial institutions and GLCs in accomplishing national agendas.

Sharing the stage with us and contributing to their respective insights were Dr. Mahadi Datuk Haji Mursihidi, and Mr Sharaad Kuttan, a well-known radio host. It was an honour and our pleasure to share our experiences. We also had a very engaging and interesting dialogue session with the participants.

30 – 31 OCTOBER: JUST ENERGY TRANSITION CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

Last October, C4 Center with other numerous CSOs



participated in the Just Energy Transition Conference in Petaling Jaya, which was jointly organized by Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) and Third World Network (TWN). The two-day conference covered a wide range of topics that covered climate and energy concerns, Malaysia's roadmap in regulating a just transition as a whole, and challenges related to the carbon market. A panel of speakers from diverse backgrounds including bureaucrats, environmentalists, researchers, and academics from various fields have shared their insights and recommendations for implementing an energy transition that benefits the economy and communities while protecting the environment. Moreover, throughout the second day, all the participants worked together in an effort to establish the strategic plan for energy transition from a climate justice perspective. We collaborated to brainstorm feasible activities that could be implemented to achieve the objective. These strategies included advocacy efforts, such as campaigning to the locals to gather feedback and petitions

on the upcoming transition that may impact them, endorsing a joint letter with other CSOs and handing it to the government, and providing policy recommendations to the relevant ministries.

As a just transition is critical in shifting from limited natural resources such as petroleum and coal to more sustainable and renewable energy, many stakeholders' livelihoods, including small SMEs and vulnerable communities, will be impacted. Thus, we require a stringent and comprehensive regulation to be incorporated into Malaysia's upcoming Climate Change Act to ensure no one's livelihood is jeopardized and the environment is well-protected. As a result, one of our recommendations from this session is to regulate transparency and public participation in every transition process to diminish the risk of corruption that could negatively impact the public and the environment. C4 Center will maintain vigilance over NRECC's updates pertaining to energy transition-related issues, especially on Malaysia's uptakes on the National Energy Transition Roadmap which was recently published by the Ministry of Economy.

BUSINESS ETHICS AND SUSTAINABILITY MODULE AT NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY



On 20 November 2023, C4 Center was invited to present a guest lecture for the Business Ethics and Sustainability module at Nottingham University Business School Malaysia. Our Policy and Programme Coordinator, Arief Hamizan, spoke on "Understanding Enablers of Corruption and Corporate Criminal Liability", with a focus on Section 17A MACC Act 2009. The discussion emphasised the need for cooperation from businesses in the fight against corruption, followed by an engaging Q&A with the students.

ENHANCING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) REVIEW PROCESS WORKSHOP

On November 15, C4 Center attended a workshop conducted by Ara Research on Enhancing Public Participation In The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Review Process. This workshop aims to strengthen the capacity of CSOs to review and assist the public in evaluating various EIA reports and increasing public participation in EIA on the ground. The project involves conducting a comprehensive evaluation and



assessment of the Malaysia EIAs through report analysis, secondary literature, and oral interviews with relevant persons.

This capacity building has assisted the participants in finding the appropriate resources to look for an EIA report of a certain development project. Nevertheless, certain EIA reports remain inaccessible to the general public as they are extremely difficult to obtain. In addition, we have received training on the methods to identify the most important information in the report, enabling us to challenge the report's credibility in an effort to prevent the actual environmental impacts that may result from the project's approval and further development. Aside from that, the participants collaborated to analyze actual EIA reports conducted in Malaysia by highlighting issues in the report's information and data and providing tangible recommendations from CSOs advocating for increased public participation with the project's affected communities and the general public.

As a result, we are able to strengthen our call for greater transparency and public involvement in any

development that negatively impacts the environment or communities by gaining an understanding of the actual dynamics of public participation as it pertains to EIAs through this workshop.

JAPAN PLASTIC WASTE TRADE PROJECT

Interview with KDEB



On December 15th, C4 Center had the opportunity to visit the Kumpulan Darul Ehsan Berhad (KDEB) Waste Management office in Shah Alam to gain insights into our ongoing environmental governance research on Japan's Plastic Waste Trade and Waste Management in Malaysia.

KDEB Waste Management is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Menteri Besar Selangor Incorporated (MBI), founded to manage domestic waste collection and public cleansing services in Selangor. In addition, KDEB offers services for collecting recyclables and cleaning public parks as well as collecting domestic and bulky waste for Industrial, Commercial, and Institutions (ICI).

We interviewed the KDEB team, including their Managing Director himself, Dato' Haji Ramli bin Mohd Tahir. They have helped us understand the complexity of waste management in Malaysia's most industrialized and most populated state. The average amount of domestic waste collected throughout Selangor alone is a worrying 7,000 tonnes per day, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions by releasing methane in the landfills. Thus, the government must spearhead the climate crisis narrative and work with the stakeholders to reduce waste production and explore low-carbon strategies in waste management.

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As a positive outlook from this meeting, C4 Center has established a connection with the KDEB team. We will continue to conduct further meetings with other departments in KDEB that handle plastic wastes from the recyclables, as well as plastic collection from ICI, in the hopes of tracking any imported plastic waste coming to Malaysia.

TALK AT HUMAN RIGHTS FESTIVAL SARAWAK

C4 Center was invited to the Human Rights Festival 2023 at Kuching, Sarawak, which took place on 9 and 10 December. The festival aimed to bring together NGOs from both East and Peninsular Malaysia to promote their work and activities to new audiences, with some also given time to give a presentation. C4 Center was in attendance, selling the Build My Town card game as well as our State of Corruption book, and showcasing our previous reports. Bryan Cheah, Researcher with C4 Center, gave a talk on the basics of corruption, public procurement, and political financing. He was even able to meet with Kuching MP, YB Kelvin Yii at the event.



10TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION (COSP10)



We extend our sincere thanks to UNODC - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the government of the United States of America for inviting C4 Center's CEO, Mr Pushpan Murugiah to the 10th session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (CoSP10) held at Atlanta, USA in December 2023. It was an important occasion where events were held bringing together, policy makers, academics, civil society organizations, young leaders and the business community to charter a future that is corrupt free.

This invitation meant more than a mere engagement for C4 Center; it was an opportunity to raise our voice globally and to share the experiences from Malaysia. At CoSP10, we engaged with anti-corruption experts, scholars, and advocates from around the world. The discussions were enlightening, and the connections we forged were invaluable. Beyond CoSP10, we

aspire to foster greater international and regional collaboration, whilst strengthening national response and advocacy works.

It was also a special honour and a recognition for C4 Center where our CEO, Pushpan Murugiah was invited to be a panellist on two very important topics.

EXPOSING THE HIDDEN LINKS:

Corruption and Human Trafficking

This panel event was jointly organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United States of America, and Sweden. Our accomplished moderator, Mr. John Brandolino, Director of the UNODC, adeptly steered the discourse, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of the intricate connections between corruption and human trafficking. The distinguished panellists, each an authority in their



field, illuminated the discussion with their insights: Sharing the stage with C4 Center CEO Pushpan Murugiah were Ambassador-at-Large Cindy Dyer (United States), Professor Luz Estella Nagle (Stetson University), Rebecca Miller (UNODC) and esteemed diplomat Claudio Nardi (Liechtenstein). Together, they spoke of the networks that perpetuate corruption and exploitation.

This topic essentially raises an important but often overlooked relationship between trafficking, smuggling and corruption. The intersection between these areas of criminality is unique in that it is interdependent. For C4 Center, this is a welcome progression in further understanding the intricacies of how corruption fuels crime in different areas of criminality.

COLLECTIVE ACTION:

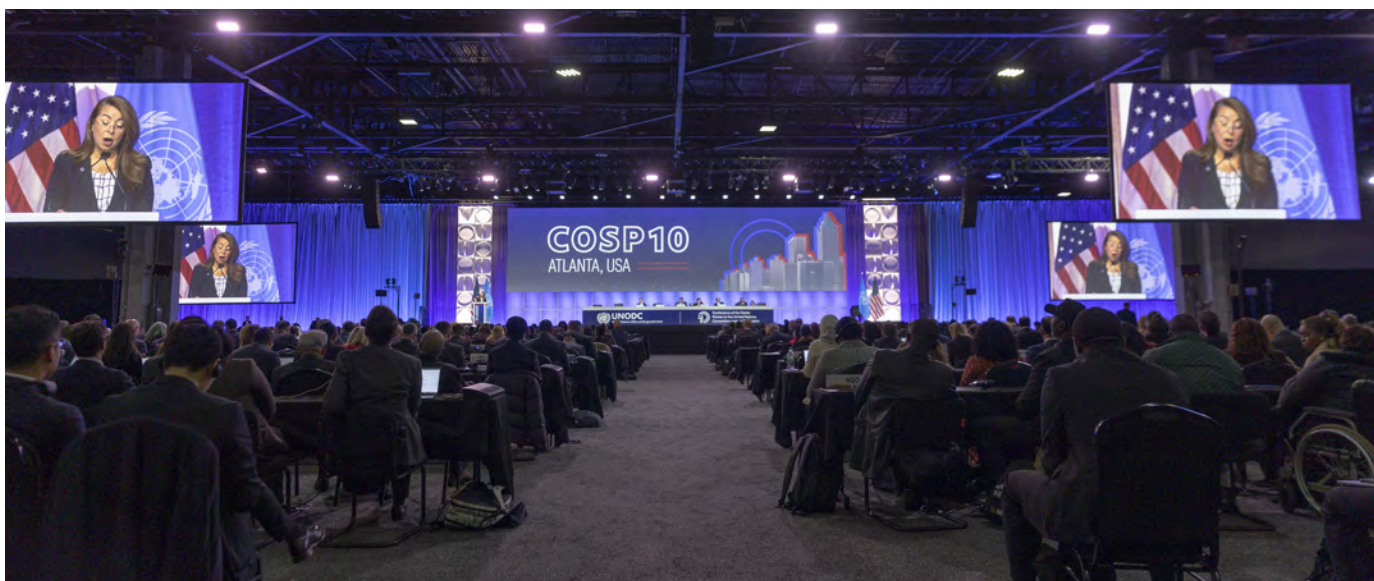
Holding the Executive to Account

This panel event was jointly organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and The Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC). C4 Center is proud to have been the

Malaysian anti-corruption CSO to represent the Malaysian perspective in this event.

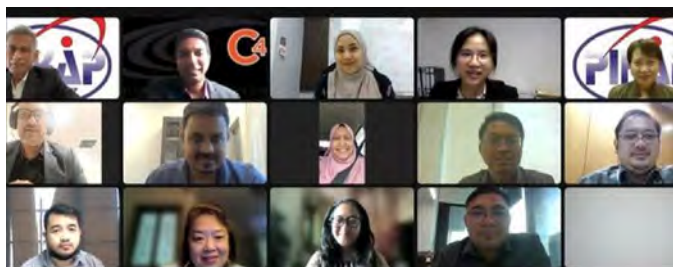
Sharing the stage with us were Ahmed Shakeel Ahmed Shabbir, a dedicated Member of Parliament and Chair of the African Parliamentarian Network for Anti-Corruption (APNAC), and Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) representing Kenya; Tom Melia, the Senior Foreign Policy Advisor to Senator Ben Cardin, Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; Carmela Siapno Fonbuena, the Executive Director of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ); Kristen Robinson, Head of Advocacy at the Open Contracting Partnership (OCP); Pushpan Murugiah, our very own CEO at C4 Center, and as Moderator Annika Wythes, UNODC's Asia and Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Advisor, skilfully guiding the discussion.

This discussion centred around ways to hold the executive accountable. From the Malaysian perspective, we shared the ecosystem that exist within the political, economic and legal frameworks that allows the executive a free hand to profiteer and abuse their powers. This includes weak oversight mechanisms and lack of independence of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, the vast economic power that the executives hold over the financial system and government linked companies. The panellists while acknowledging the needs for reforms, also discussed other ways to hold the executive to account, such as the role of journalists in conducting investigations and exposing corrupt officials.



COLLABORATION

S.17A OF THE MALAYSIAN ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION (MACC) ACT ONLINE TRAINING



C4 Center held our first online training on S.17A of the MACC Act, conducted by C4 Center's Deputy CEO Sudhagaran Stanley. The training was attended by representatives of various private corporations, journalists, members of the Malaysian International Chamber of Commerce and Industry and more.

Under Section 17A of the MACC Act, commercial organisations are liable and can be punished if their employees or associates are involved in corrupt practices.

C4 Center's objective behind this training is to provide capacity development for corporate businesses on the requirements of S.17A and the adequate provision. We aim to assist companies to navigate through adequate procedures including developing a robust Whistle-blower Protection policy within the organisation.

COMANGO FINAL CONSULTATION ON MALAYSIA'S UPR (4TH CYCLE)

C4 Center Advocates for the Inclusion of Corruption as a Human Rights Issue

As a member of the Coalition of Malaysian NGOs in the UPR Process (COMANGO), C4 Center attended the final consultation on the draft COMANGO Joint Stakeholder Submission to provide our perspective on the intersection of human rights and corruption and good governance. Further, a preliminary draft of C4 Center's own UPR Sole Submission was presented to the attendees.

The UPR process is one of the few avenues under international law for civil society organisations (CSOs) to compel the Malaysian government to answer for the measures it has taken to protect and uphold principles of human rights, or lack thereof. CSO involvement with the UPR is imperative for the efficacy of the review, as they are able to provide an unbiased first-hand account of the government's successes and failures.



Unfortunately during Malaysia's previous UPR cycle in 2018, topics of corruption and good governance were scarcely addressed. The links between corruption, good governance and human rights have been well-recognised – any government's ability to protect and uphold human rights is negatively impacted by corruption and poor governance e.g. misappropriation of funds which could have instead been used to improve public infrastructure. Therefore, C4 Center sought to provide insight in a key area of Malaysian human rights advocacy which had been overlooked in the past, as well as to contribute to and show solidarity with, the broader civil society ecosystem focused on human rights issues.

UPR STAKEHOLDER SUBMISSIONS FOR MALAYSIA'S 4TH CYCLE REVIEW

Advocating for the Intersection of Corruption and Governance with Human Rights

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process is an important mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council, where each UN member state undergoes a peer review

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of its human rights records for the past 5 years. Malaysia's 4th cycle review is scheduled to be conducted in early 2024, and in order to assist other member states in conducting the review, CSOs are allowed to submit their own reports providing a third-party account of the nation's successes and failures in upholding fundamental human rights.



In July, C4 Center decided to fully utilise this avenue to seek accountability from the Malaysian government by submitting 2 stakeholder submissions on the intersections between corruption and governance and human rights – a sole submission focused on this issue, as well as a joint submission with the Coalition of Malaysian NGOs in the UPR Process (COMANGO). The topics addressed within the reports cover a wide range of topics: public service delivery and public procurement, whistleblower protection, independence of oversight institutions, and the right to information.

Together with COMANGO, C4 Center also attended a meeting with the Human Rights and Humanitarian Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) on 10th August 2023 to discuss the matters raised in the stakeholder reports. We trust that by engaging with government entities such as MOFA in a conciliatory manner (instead of taking an adversarial approach), CSOs will be able to build rapport and gain further ground in pushing for reforms to be passed.

While corruption and governance were scarcely addressed during Malaysia's previous UPR cycle in 2018, C4 Center hopes that these topics will gain more attention during this cycle – after all, good governance strengthens the efficacy of the government's measures to promote and uphold human rights (particularly economic and social rights), whereas corruption neg-

atively impacts the same. In order to further promote these ideas, C4 Center (together with COMANGO) plans to engage closely with embassies and representatives of other UN member states on this matter in the coming months.

ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN DIVISION OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MALAYSIA



During C4 Center's engagement with the Human Rights and Humanitarian Division (HRHD) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) under the Coalition of Malaysian NGOs in the UPR Process (COMANGO) in August 2023, HRHD representatives mentioned their interest in organising programs for MFA staff in collaboration with C4 Center on the topics of anti-corruption and good governance.

Subsequently, a follow-up meeting was held on 3rd October 2023 at Wisma Putra between representatives of C4 Center and HRHD. In this meeting, we sought to identify key areas of potential collaboration aimed at building the capacity of MFA staff with regards to anti-corruption and good governance. As a result of this meeting, CEO Pushpan Murugiah was invited to speak to an auditorium of MFA staff on "Understanding Various Corruptions" – a crash course introductory seminar on the various ways in which corruption occurs.

This marks the first instance of C4 Center's direct involvement with MFA, and hopefully this shall lead to further collaborations in the future.

CIVIL SOCIETY MODEL RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI) BILL

In collaboration with the Centre for Independent Journalism (CIJ), Sinar Project and ARTICLE 19, C4 Center contributed towards the drafting of the joint Civil Society Model RTI Bill to guide lawmakers in drafting the proposed federal RTI legislation. The Model RTI Bill includes various provisions which set out the procedure for disclosure applications, an exhaustive set of exempted categories based on the well-established 3-part test, and the structure of the Information Commission which shall oversee the RTI regime.

In conjunction with this project, C4 Center attended meetings with the Commonwealth Ombudsman of Australia (who carries out RTI functions for the Australian Capital Territory) on 10th November 2023 and representatives of the Bar Council on 30th November 2023 – who provided their input and comments on the Model RTI Bill as well as RTI principles in general.

In 2024 the RTI cluster of civil society organisations plans to conduct further engagements and campaigns leading up to the introduction of the RTI Bill in Parliament, with specific focus on non-negotiable criteria such as the foundational principle of government data being “open by default” and RTI requests not having to be justified to the government by the requesting party.

The RTI Model Bill shall form a core part of this ongoing advocacy, to inform members of the public of what an workable ideal RTI law should be.

KLRA+SD ENGAGEMENTS

The Kuala Lumpur Residents Action for Sustainable Development Association (KLRA+SD) is a coalition of local Kuala Lumpur residents’ associations who voice out on issues pertaining to development, sustainability, and governance in the region. C4 Center, along with other civil society organisations (CSOs) such as the Centre for Independent Journalism (CIJ) and CSO Platform for Reform, entered into engagements with KLRA+SD to help with the mobilisation of grassroots advocacy movements. The CSOs provided KLRA+SD with updates on the development of key legislation such as the Right to Information (RTI) Act and the Ombudsman Act, which were relevant to their concerns as an interest group for residents’ associations. Further, the CSOs provided the knowledge base and resources for them to adapt and utilise in their own outreach and advocacy. A particular area of interest for KLRA+SD is the reintroduction of local council elections as a method of ensuring accountability at the local authority level. In 2024, C4 Center shall continue engaging with KLRA+SD to explore possibilities of mobilising these associations to spark renewed interest and discourse on this matter.





**Dirty
Money**

BUILD MY-TOWN PLAY SESSIONS

BUILD MY-TOWN PLAY SESSION AT POLYTECHNIC PORT DICKSON



In conjunction with World Radio Day, C4 Center and our collaborative partner Rasuah Busters were given the opportunity to host a gameplay of our latest release, 'Build My-Town' at Port Dickson Polytechnic on Wednesday.

'Build My-Town' is a card game designed to be used as a method of learning good governance, rejecting elements of corruption, and raising awareness among young voters in a fun and entertaining way through acting as an Member of Parliament (MP). Through the gameplay sessions, the students were all having fun, and slightly competitive as they try to build the best constituency and ultimately win the game.

BUILD MY-TOWN PLAY SESSION WITH PUSAT KOMAS



C4 Center also held a Build My-Town play session with Pusat KOMAS, another CSO with whom C4 Center works to advocate for institutional reforms.

BUILD MY-TOWN PLAY SESSION WITH PENGGERAK BELIA SELANGOR DUN BANDAR UTAMA

C4 Center hosted a Build My-Town play session with Penggerak Belia Selangor DUN Bandar Utama. YB Jamaliah Jamaluddin made the event merrier by participating and giving a speech on the importance of the youth's participation in politics.



C4 Center's Acting CEO, Pushpan Murugiah guided the participants on the guidelines of the game while educating the crowd on the key reforms C4 Center is pushing for. Overall, it was a jubilant session with a free flow of ice creams and lattes.

BUILD MY-TOWN PLAY SESSION AT VIVAE BOARD GAME CAFÉ

C4 Center hosted Build My-Town play sessions in collaboration with Vivae Board Game Cafe at both their branches located in Damansara and Ampang. Build My-Town is part of our advocacy work to create awareness about corruption among the general public. This play session served as a platform for networking with other prominent faces in the local tabletop game industry, educating the public on the role of an MP and creating awareness of the key reform changes that we constantly push for. This is another platform in which C4 Center attempts to engage with youths on institutional reforms.

In Build My-Town, every player acts as a Member of Parliament (MP) in charge of a constituency. The goal of each player is to improve their constituency by building developments. Besides the primary purpose of building developments, another key mechanic of the game is passing key reforms such as the Whistle-

blower Protection Act, Ombudsman and more much like real-life Parliamentary voting, which significantly impact the outcome of the game.



By taking up the role of an MP, players will be able to develop an understanding of the important role MPs play in pushing for reforms in Parliament and how we as normal citizens can advocate for reforms through our representatives in Parliament.

BUILD MY-TOWN PLAY SESSION AT KLANG CAR FREE PROGRAM

C4 Center took part in the 'Car Free Klang Day' Program themed 'Malaysia Without Corruption' at Klang, a royal city and former capital of the state of Selangor, Malaysia. Klang's car-free day, held on the third week of each month, has become an event many look forward to. The goal behind the theme of the event is to raise awareness within the Klang Municipal Council in particular and the local community in general, that corruption is the country's number one enemy.

C4 Center was there as part of our advocacy work to create awareness about corruption among the general public through our political card game, Build My-Town. Through this campaign, we were able to deliver our message to the public in a fun way as even kids as young as 12 years old took part in the gameplay session and learnt a lot about Malaysia's legal system, institutional reforms and how Parliament works.

As with all our gameplay sessions, C4 Center hopes that through playing Build My-Town, players will develop a curiosity for the many reforms needed to improve Malaysia that civil society organisations often advocate for.

ANY GAMES CON @ JAYA SHOPPING CENTER

C4 Center participated in a two-day Malaysia tabletop games conference, AnyGames Con from the 29th and 30th of July 2023, at Jaya Shopping Center. We promoted our card game, Build My-Town which interested many individuals to approach our booth to better understand the mechanics behind our card game. The objective of the card game is to educate and bring awareness to the public on the roles of an MP of a constituency and a sneak peek of how they execute their duties when tabling a bill in Parliament. It would be a true test of their integrity as a player, as they would have to decide if they would remain a 'Clean' MP or a 'Dirty' MP by virtue of deciding which type of money they would use to build the facilities in their constituency.

On the 30th of July, our Acting CEO, Pushpan Murugiah gave a talk on 'Changing Minds and Instituting Reforms Through Games'. The talk consisted of an introduction of our previous works as well as the reforms C4 Center advocates for. It was a fruitful and informative session.



In short, the two-day event was a big success as we had more than 80 people approach our booth and 49 decks of our card game was sold. All in all it was a great event that allowed us to interact with the participants of this conference as well as introduced us to the world of the tabletop game community.

PLAY SESSION WITH MONPAC @ MONASH UNI



On the 24th of August 2023, C4 Center conducted a 'Build My-Town' play session at Monash University with Monash's Political Awareness Club (MONPAC) titled "Build My-Town Go". This was an interactive and intriguing event as it introduced university students to the roles of an MP and how they can better understand the reforms implemented in Parliament as well as reforms that should be brought up to Parliament. This event was held at a common room and was a great success.

The main purpose of this event was to engage with university students on their knowledge of corruption and anti-corruption as well as their understanding of what entails under the role of an MP and how they are able to table reforms through our card game. Essentially, this event provided a perfect opportunity for university students to gain interest in understanding reforms through a game and peak their interest in the anti-corruption nexus.

The event was moderated by MONPAC's Vice President, Bryant Koh and one of our research officers, Sangeetha Niscinta Nandini gave a presentation on how beneficial Build My-Town is at creating awareness and curiosity about our political scene here in Malaysia. The play session started after the introduction. There were a few facilitators from the MONPAC committee who assisted with guiding the teams. We had more than 25 participants for this event and it was a delightful and engaging time for everyone.

As the event came to a close, a short sharing session was conducted by our team to gauge the participants' feedback on the game. The responses received were positive.

In short, the event was a resounding success. The event managed to introduce participants to the roles of an MP and create awareness on the power of reforms. We hope through this event, we have encouraged students to be more aware of the political nexus as well as the implementations of reforms here in Malaysia.

BOXCON @ THE STRAND MALL KOTA DAMANSARA

On the 26th to the 27th of August 2023, C4 Center was invited as an exhibitor to partake in Boardgame Odyssey Expo (BOXCON), a tabletop game conference consisting of local and international tabletop game organisations. We were there to promote our card game, Build My-Town. Amongst us, were tabletop game organisations such as Faculty of Fun (Nasi Lemak 'The game'), Capital Gain Studio (Singapore 1889, Happy Dim Sum), etc.



This event was held at The Strand Mall, Kota Damansara. We had numerous people visit our booth during the two-day event. Many were left intrigued and curious about the card game and some provided positive feedback on the playability of the game. We had the privilege of having avid tabletop players as well as card game enthusiasts drop by our booth to give Build My-Town a try and the response was equally positive.

It was a delightful two-days as we conducted play sessions and networked with other tabletop organisations.

SINAR HARIAN (RASUAH BUSTERS) KARNIVAL

From the 8th to the 10th of September 2023, C4 Center was invited by Rasuah Busters to Sinar Harian's event, 'Karnival Sinar Bestari'. We were invited to promote our card game, 'Build My-Town' with the participants/audience. It was a great opportunity as the overall demographic of the attendees of this event ranged from primary school students to secondary school students and teachers.



This gave us the opportunity to engage in conversation and introduce the topic of anti-corruption and the importance of the roles of MPs as well as the need to advocate for reforms. On the 9th and 10th of September, there were bigger crowds consisting of students, teachers, parents and the general public. We were able to engage in meaningful conversations as well as conduct play sessions with the visitors coming by our booth.

As the 3-day event came to an end, we were able to understand and gauge the understanding of students and the general public when it comes to anti-corruption and advocacy for reforms and network with the various organisations that were present during the event.

POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY MODULE AT HELP UNIVERSITY, SUBANG

On 14th of November 2023, C4 Center was invited to engage with students from the Political Psychology

module at HELP University, Subang. Our Policy and Programme Coordinator, Arief Hamizan, gave a short



lecture on corruption and how it occurs in Malaysia. This was followed by a Build My-Town play session with the students.

HUMAN RIGHTS FESTIVAL

On the 10th of December 2023, C4 Center was invited by the Human Rights Division of the Bar Council to take part in their annual 'Human Rights Festival'. This event is held to highlight the efforts of various human rights organisations, and at the same time, empower the public. Various NGOs and CSOs were present at the festival with booths as well as interesting and entertaining competitions and performances.

The main purpose of our participation with this event was to enhance the public's knowledge on anti-corruption by easing in the conversations on governance reforms and C4 Center's position on current political and public matters. We displayed some of our previous and current reports for the public to read as well as conducted game play sessions with our card game, 'Build My-Town'. We received encouraging feedback from the many visitors that drop by our booth to learn more about our work and to have conversations on possible solutions for our current political climate.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

C4 Center extends heartfelt appreciation to our esteemed partners and funders. We would like to recognize the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), Open Society Foundation (OSF), East-West Management Institute (EWMI), Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternative (GAIA) for their generous financial support. Their contributions have been instrumental in enabling C4 Center to create impactful outcomes for Malaysia. Without their financial assistance and the dedication of Malaysians committed to combating corruption, our achievements would not have been possible.

We also express our gratitude to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for their ongoing partnership and collaborative efforts.

Furthermore, we commend the hard work and dedication of the C4 Center team. It is through our collective endeavours that we have delivered tangible results to the public.

Lastly, we extend sincere thanks to fellow Malaysians and members of the public for their unwavering support of our programs.



OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATIONS



**NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR
DEMOCRACY**

SUPPORTING FREEDOM AROUND THE WORLD

**E A S T • W E S T
M A N A G E M E N T
I N S T I T U T E**

#BreakFreeFromPlastic



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

FINANCIAL REPORT

DONORS AND OTHER INCOME	DURATION	TOTAL(MYR)
Open Society Foundations (OSF)	2023 - 2024	462,000.00
National Endowment for Democracy (NED)	2023 - 2024	742,888.50
East-West Management Institute (EWMI)	2023	12,035.40
Break Free From Plastic Movement (BFFP) via the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternative Philippines (GAIA)	2023 - 2024	61,720.90
Donations and Local Fund Raising	2023	20,409.68

Total 1,299,054.48

PROJECT & PROGRAMMES EXPENDITURE	TOTAL(MYR)
Business in Politics	99,030.00
Cross Border Corruption	180,020.00
Environmental Governance	48,400.00
Procurement	58,530.00
Ombudsman	59,250.00
Youth Engagement	13,950.00
C4 Center General Operations	712,400.00

Total 1,171,580.00

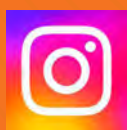
MEDIA ENGAGEMENT



22 Press Statements
released in 2023



C4 Center Featured in at least 100
articles or publications in 2023



IG followers:
685, up by 33%
from 2022



FB Followers:
6.3k, up by 2%
from 2022



IG Interactions:
840, up by 100%
compared to 2022



FB Reach:
17.7k, up by 19.6%
compared to 2022



**Social Media
Outreach**



Profile Visits:
2.6k, up by 4.3%
compared to 2022



Profile Visits:
3.5k, up by 13.5%
compared to 2022







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