

# Enriching Communities



GAB employees at "The Big Day Out".

We foster positive relationships with the communities in which we operate. Although our biggest immediate impact is in the Sungei Way area, where our brewery has been part of the community for 55 years, we know that we are part of the everyday lives of millions of people across Malaysia, who are our consumers, employees or suppliers. We see all of these people as our community and we are committed to enriching the lives of those we touch. However, we wish to go beyond these commercial relationships and establish ongoing relations and engagement, contributing in a meaningful way to these communities, including those that are not immediate stakeholders.

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## The GAB Foundation

To ensure that our investment in communities could be structured and sustained for long-term impact, we established the GAB Foundation in 2007. The Foundation functions as a spearhead for our community initiatives and aims to create an impact on the lives of people around us, reflecting our corporate values of striving for excellence, acting with integrity and having a genuine respect for people, society and its diversity.

The Trustees of the Foundation are the GAB Chairman, Managing Director and three independent Trustees. The GAB Foundation emphasises engagement with partners who share common goals and who can contribute skills and expertise. Federal and State Government departments have been stalwart supporters, while civil society partners from the local communities and NGOs have been instrumental in sharing their providing invaluable information and technical advice.

### GAB Foundation Board of Trustees are:

Tan Sri Saw Huat Lye – Chairman

Charles Henry Ireland – Trustee

Dato' Mahadev Shankar – Independent Trustee

Dato' Dr. Goh Cheng Teik – Independent Trustee

Dato' Ghazali bin Dato' Mohd Yusoff  
– Independent Trustee



Our efforts this year was awarded with the prestigious StarBiz-ICRM Award in the Community Category.

The GAB Foundation is constantly looking at more avenues to increase the positive impacts of our projects. While we work with specific communities in each of our programmes, the ultimate aim is to make a difference to the Malaysian community as a whole, by setting an example and inspiring others to make a difference. Our focus over the coming years will be to encourage participation from employees, distributors, trade outlets and other stakeholders.

The Foundation's focus is structured around three pillars: Environmental Conservation, Education and Community. Our main activity under the environment pillar has been the river rehabilitation programme (see pages 36-39).

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### Education

#### READING CORNERS

There are children in Malaysia who face difficulties in accessing all the tools necessary to learn and develop academically, often caused by geographical distance and poverty. GAB Foundation has long focused on Reading Corners as a means to give children access to books and learning. Starting with the Tamil school children, we found that this was an effective means of supporting children in disadvantaged communities.

In FY2010, the GAB Foundation expanded the project to East Malaysia in collaboration with the Association of Research and Development Movement of Singai Sarawak (REDEEMS), a non-profit organisation that oversees the development affairs of the Bidayah community and Borneo Child Aid Society, a Sabah-based NGO. The reading corners provide English reading materials include textbooks, encyclopaedias, dictionaries, storybooks and general knowledge books to facilitate sharing of knowledge among the children. In FY2010, six Reading Corners were set up

in Sarawak and in FY2011, another 12 were added in three locations in Sabah. In Sabah, the Reading Corners are all located within the Learning Centres run by Borneo Child Aid Society.

GAB Foundation has invested approximately RM490,000 to date in setting up Reading Corners in Malaysia, and will continue to explore opportunities to widen the reach.

#### PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME

The GAB Foundation Partial Scholarship Scheme provides deserving Malaysian students pursuing higher studies at certificate, diploma or undergraduate levels with a chance to achieve their ambitions. In FY2011, the Foundation did not open its partial scholarship scheme to new applications. However, the Foundation continues to support 31 undergraduate students who are pursuing their education in local and foreign institutions under its current scheme. To-date, the GAB Foundation has awarded scholarships to 38 students with a total value of more than RM740,000.

As part of the scholarship scheme, the GAB Foundation also organises workshops for the recipients to equip them with the skills and etiquette they need to venture successfully into the workforce. Recipients of the Foundation's 2009 scholarship participated in an all expense paid two-day life skills workshop where they were taught communication skills, interview skills, personal grooming tips, how to manage their personal finances and how to write an effective resume.

#### ENGLISH PROGRAMME

In our immediate community, our most well-established initiative is our English Programme, which assists Tamil school children improve their English skills. This year, we strengthened the programme by offering school children extra English classes outside of their school hours to help them improve their English language proficiency. We are supporting 200 school children from 5 primary schools.

More details on the background of the GAB Foundation and its activities can be found at our website [www.gabfoundation.org](http://www.gabfoundation.org)



## Amy Bala – Child Development Specialist: Plant the Seed, then Nurture it

I first began to work with GAB four years ago, when I was asked to help deliver a storytelling project for the GAB Foundation. The project was aimed at teaching children in disadvantaged communities about water conservation. I identified child care trainers who were trained in storytelling, and a partner to write and develop appropriate stories for this project. The stories were translated into the other three local languages. Through my connections in the Department of Social Welfare and NGOs, we were able to reach out to activity centres, care centres and kindergartens. We visited each community three times with one module leading to the other. The project ran for about two years.

The story telling project was a great way to teach children and had great spill-over effects. Parents told us that the children were convincing them to conserve water and wanted them to come to the storytelling.

Later on, I became involved with the GAB Foundation English Programme. Tamil school children have poor command of English as the curriculum is taught mainly in their mother tongue. My partner - who teaches early childhood - and I redeveloped the curriculum, because it was very academic in nature and examples were not locally appropriate. We developed child friendly, activity based lesson plans that linked to and reinforced their school curriculum.

Trained facilitators now teach Standard 3 pupils in five schools reaching out to 196 children.

Three schools are facilitated by teachers from the school and two by college students. The facilitators have great community spirit and some of the sessions are carried out at weekends. Most come from financially challenged families, but have moved ahead and got their degrees, and now they want to give back. The main challenge in this project is to find facilitators who use grammatically correct English because they also come from the same education system. We train the facilitators not only about their academic approach to learning but also how to use more visual and child friendly techniques.

In terms of impact, the Foundation wanted to see academic results, but the results did not drastically improve in the 6 months the project was implemented. However, we found intangible results such as increased confidence, improved communication skills and enhanced motivation, achieved through improved attendance at classes and a better use of the English language.

The GAB Foundation is planting seeds and it needs time to be nurtured. It is important to strategise and plan a long-term commitment - for example for five years. There is no immediate need to expand the programme to more classes but we need to think long-term and consider the next stage. What will happen when these children become teenagers and go to Form 1? They will really need someone to help them in adjusting to a mainstream school where they often have a culture shock.

I also think that the Foundation could develop a more holistic understanding of its impacts. The children come from families where parental involvement and academic support is weak.

Some are single parents, others work two jobs. Changes and impact from our involvement need to be seen more holistically rather than just oriented around improving English. Changes take time and impacts may come in different forms. It will be good if GAB staff were trained and involved so they see the investment GAB Foundation is putting into the community and understand the changes taking place.

Overall, I commend GAB for their sustained commitment to give back to the communities. Many other companies prefer one-off activities, often in the form of donations. Although there are always improvements to be made, it is great that they have pledged to work with grassroots communities.

### About Amy Bala

Amy Bala is a Child Development Specialist, and a social worker by training. She retired from the civil service after working with the Department of Social Welfare for 32 years, and has extensive experience working with children in difficult circumstances. However, her focus has been and is still in the area of early childhood, especially in alternate Child Care. Amy is involved in research, curriculum design and training of child care providers and educators as well as social workers. She constantly advocates quality child care and child rights through training and consultation with government and non-governmental organisations. Amy is also a court advisor in Children's Court Petaling Jaya.

## Enriching Communities

### A View from the Parent Teachers Association

#### HOW DID GAB GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR SCHOOL?

The English Programme by the GAB Foundation is in its second year. Amy Bala is one of the facilitators for training the teachers. We are very happy with the support that we are receiving. Not many schools have this opportunity.

#### HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE BEING HELPED?

Our school has a population of just over 200 students in six grades. The project funded by GAB Foundation is for Standard 3 and 4 and supports about 40 students.

#### DESCRIBE THE STUDENTS WHO ATTEND THE PROGRAMME?

Students are selected based on income needs, so they come from poor families. Parents are usually former estate workers, or currently working in a factory. After school, the children go home and don't receive much support for studying. We keep the children back after school to give them more support and extra help.

#### WHAT HAS CHANGED?

We feel and we see a lot of changes in the school. Proficiency in English is much improved and you can see students getting better. The teachers notice improvements in their grades.

Our school has a long history of not performing well in the UPSR (Primary School Assessment Test). Our average rate is 20%. With help that we have been receiving, we expect that the results of this batch could go up to 80%–90% when they take the exam in a few years.

The additional help provided in this programme is not only in English and is not conducted like the usual classroom in schools. It is more like a private school, where there is more interaction and students are asked to make presentations. Students are learning rather than just being taught.

Attendance for these additional classes is almost 100%. The budget from GAB Foundation also provides for a nutritious meal when they attend. Parents are also happy and keep sending children to school.

#### WHAT CAN GAB DO MORE OF?

English is a global language and we think it is important for our students. At this age, mastering three languages is not easy. The environment our students come from also does not provide much support and motivation.

GAB Foundation funds a two-day motivational camp once a year and we would like to ask if they could do more of these, either half yearly or quarterly. We feel that they students enjoy it and grow as a result of it.

I think it is also important to implement a more structured evaluation process to document improvements. The evaluation should not just be on English but more holistic such as confidence and self esteem.

#### About Mr. Gunasegeran Seerangan

Gunasegeran Seerangan is the Chairman of Parents and Teachers' Association (PTA) since May 2008. He is a qualified electrical engineer and currently works as an auditor specialising in Quality and Environmental Management Systems. He has two children studying in SJKT Taman Permata. His son Gopinath is in Standard 5 and daughter Abirami is in Standard 2. He is married to Ms. Kalyani who teaches Bahasa Malaysia in SMK Dengkil. Together with the PTA team, he has worked on identifying needs of the school, and engaging partners to develop programmes and initiatives to improve the standard of the school.

## Community

Our community pillar is focused on promoting volunteering and engagement between GAB staff and the communities in which we operate. The focal point is "The Big Day Out", an annual event in which GAB employees across the country are challenged to come up with impactful activities with a non-profit organisation or a charity of their choice. Employees work in teams and are allocated seed money to use for their activity. "The Big Day Out" programme is a way to involve all employees, regardless of where they live in Malaysia.

In FY2011, we decided to invite our business partners to be part of this project. As a result, more than 550 employees and 100 of our business partners across the country participated in 33 different community projects that included: planting of mangrove seedlings, conducting basic health screening for village folks, building a physical therapy area for a school in Petaling Jaya and running a blood donation drive.

### THE BIG DAY OUT - THE ENGINEERING TEAM

The Engineering Team broke up into two teams in a bid to conserve the environment and improve community relations. This gotong-royong effort to beautify and maintain the Sungei Way town was a mode of getting to know the neighbours and fostering community rapport with them.

The first team's task was to clean GAB's exit which connects the Seri Setia plaza with the Company. The team faced the challenging task of chopping the branches of a nearby tree and trimming wild bushes around the area. "It wasn't an easy task, chopping the tree branches with minimal equipment and on top of that there was bad weather. However, determination and courage goes a long way," noted one of the team leaders, Tan Seng Kiat.

The team then made their way to clean the pedestrian bridge connecting the Seri Setia Plaza and the Company by sweeping the rubbish on the bridge and cleaning the clogged drains and the exit areas of the overhead bridge. With the help of the village chief, the team also identified three main groups living in the town in need of assistance: a single mother with three children, one of them being disabled; a 75 year old single man who depended on public donations; and an old folks' home. These three groups were given a month's worth of groceries each.

The second team was tasked with the clearing of overgrown bushes and plants of the Sungei Way Old Folks' home. Due to the seniors' old age, they were unable to throw away their rubbish properly. This resulted to the accumulation of waste around the area, creating environmental and safety hazards.

"We practically filled two lorries with rubbish, and I feel that we did a very good job in painting the gate and the home's letterbox. We were even afraid that the owners may not recognise their own house!" said team leader Ng Joo Chan.



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### THE BIG DAY OUT – EQUIPS

For the Big Day Out, our colleagues from the Key Accounts On-trade and Central Sales took part in a fund raising activity to help upgrade a school for special needs children, as well as organising a birthday party for them. Consisting of 353 students and 39 teachers, the Sekolah Kebangsaan Satu Sultan Alam Shah had approached the Central Sales team in the hopes that they would help them install an awning at the school corridor. A short visit to the school however, revealed that the school was in need of more than just an awning. The school's roof was in terrible shape, causing leaks when it rained, and there was an abandoned physical therapy area due to the school's insufficient budget. The budget needed to complete all the works was RM 19,550.

"The school's original request was only to have us rebuild the school's awning but they never imagined that we would actually do something about the abandoned project due to the high costs. Therefore

we took it upon ourselves to share what we have seen with our trade partners and distributors, and tried to raise some money to cover the outstanding expenses," said team leader Ong Kee Kong.

At the end of the day, the team had successfully achieved their objectives by:

- Completing the sand pool by cementing, painting and filling the pool up with sand
- Cleaning and painting the fountain at the Physical Therapy area
- Cementing the cracked floors and clearing rubbish around the Physical Therapy Area
- Installing the Therapy tiles around the sand pool
- Convincing the contractor to complete the abandoned project by sponsoring RM4,612

The level of support received from the teams' business partners was so overwhelming, that the team managed to raise RM14,938 for the school – a feat that is rarely achieved by many in just one day.



### THE BIG DAY OUT – MALACCA

A team from the Commercial Department of the Malacca office carried out a blood donation campaign for this year's Big Day Out project. The project, under the collaboration of the Malaccan General Hospital and Mahkota Parade, a local shopping mall, was an effort to create public awareness on the importance of donating blood, as well as to replenish the Malaccan blood bank.

The 7-hour long event, which was officiated by YB Gan Tian Loo – Member of Parliament for Duyung, was attended by various Chinese Associations and business partners. Also participating in the project was the Director of Joy Advertising, Joy Chan and his employees.

"Naturally, I felt a little nervous, but knowing that I was helping with a good cause helped me get through it easily" said GAB veteran Mr. Ee Teck Joo. We had a total of 58 blood donors.

**PROGRESS AGAINST REPORTED TARGETS IN 2010 – COMMUNITY**

Targets set for FY2011	Status	Comments
The Foundation will continue to sponsor the reading corners and increase the number of schools we sponsor.	●	In FY2011, the Foundation set up a total of 17 reading corners – 5 in Klang Valley and 12 in Sabah.
The Foundation will continue its cause to improve the English Language proficiency amongst Tamil school children. In FY2011, the Foundation will work with child specialists to develop an English Enhancement Programme for primary school children, to train trainers to run this programme and to measure its effectiveness.	●	The modules for Standard 2 and 3 students were developed in FY2011. A total of 200 students from 5 schools were enrolled in this programme.
The Foundation will be looking at raising more funds for education in FY2011.	●	No fund-raising activities were held by the Foundation in FY2011 to specifically raise funds for this purpose. However, some of the donations from the public were channelled towards the setting up of reading corners.
The Foundation will continue to award the scholarships to deserving students.	●	The Foundation is currently supporting 31 scholars. No new scholarships were awarded in FY2011 as we are in the midst of reviewing the scholarship scheme to ensure that it meets its objectives.
GAB employees are encouraged and invited to participate in GAB Foundation activities. We are looking at making “The Big Day Out” an annual event.	●	Close to 600 staff and 100 business partners participated in the Big Day Out 2011.

● Fully achieved   ● Partially achieved   ● Not achieved