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A Situational Analysis for the GCED Curriculum Development & Integration (CDI) Project in Malaysia

**GCED CDI PROJECT
ROUND 4**

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Publisher



The Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) is a UNESCO Category 2 Centre established in 2000 according to the Agreement between UNESCO and the Government of the Republic of Korea, with the mandate to promote Education for International Understanding (EIU) and Global Citizenship Education (GCED) toward a Culture of Peace. APCEIU has been at the forefront of promoting GCED and thereby supporting UNESCO Member states to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, SDG 4.7 in particular.

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Foreword

Global crises of the 21st century, including climate change, wars, social inequality and divides call for transformation for a better future. Global Citizenship Education (GCED) aims to foster responsible citizens who have capacities to deal with global challenges and build solidarity in the interconnected world. Acknowledging its growing needs, GCED was included as one of the targets of Education 2030 in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In this context, APCEIU launched Curriculum Development and Integration (CDI) Project in 2016, with the support of the government of the Republic of Korea. CDI Project aims to support mainstreaming of GCED in the national curriculum of the partner country and also support the development of related educational materials including teachers' manuals, training guides and teaching and learning materials. APCEIU completed the 1st Round (Cambodia, Mongolia, Uganda and Colombia, 2016-2018) and the 2nd Round (Kenya, Lebanon, Sri Lanka and the Philippines, 2019-2021) of the Project. APCEIU is currently operating the 3rd Round (Georgia, Indonesia, Lao PDR and Rwanda, 2021-2023) and the 4th Round (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Ghana and Malaysia, 2022-2024).

The CDI Project has been implemented in ways that reflect the educational context and demand of each country, believing that responding to local context and needs is the most effective way to implement GCED in each country. Against this background, APCEIU entrusted the UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE-UNESCO) to conduct this Situational Analysis, as a part of the Project, aiming to explore and articulate socio-historical and educational context and country-specified demand related to the implementation of GCED. Based on this Situational Analysis, both coordinators from APCEIU and Project participants in Malaysia will understand the background and starting point of the Project and figure out relevant objectives and strategies of the project that deal with key challenges and demands in Malaysian education.

Project Introduction

This situational analysis was commissioned by APCEIU and conducted by the UNESCO International Bureau of Education (UNESCO-IBE) as a background paper to inform key issues and strategies for its GCED Curriculum Development and Integration (GCED CDI) Project in Malaysia (2022-2024).

Global Citizenship Education Curriculum Development and Integration Project (GCED CDI)

In the face of the global challenges of the 21st century, the need for global citizenship education became ever more evident and increasing, eventually leading to the integration of GCED into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 4.7) in 2015. To effectively respond to such growing needs, APCEIU launched the GCED Curriculum Development and Integration Project (GCED CDI) in 2016, with the support of the government of the Republic of Korea. Designed as a three-year project for each round, the GCED CDI aims to support the participating countries with mainstreaming GCED into their educational system specifically by embedding GCED into their curricular materials and/or enhancing the capacity to integrate GCED into curricular implementation. Starting from the 1st Round (Cambodia, Mongolia, Uganda, and Colombia, 2016-2018), APCEIU completed the 2nd Round (Kenya, Lebanon, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines, 2019-2021) of the Project and is currently operating the 3rd Round (Georgia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, and Rwanda, 2021-2023) and the 4th Round (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Ghana, and Malaysia, 2022-2024).

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Acronyms

APCEIU	Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding under the auspices of UNESCO
CHEP	Cultural Heritage Education Programme
GC	Global Citizenship
GCED	Global Citizenship Education
GNI	Gross National Income
HOTS	Higher Order Thinking Skills
IBE-UNESCO	UNESCO International Bureau of Education
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
KBSM	Integrated Secondary School Curriculum
KBSR	New Primary School Curriculum
KSSM	Standard Curriculum for Secondary Schools
KSSR	Standard Curriculum for Primary Schools
MEB	Malaysia Education Blueprint
MOE	Ministry of Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PT3	Form Three Assessment
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA-PLM	Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics
UPSR	Primary School Achievement Test
VOCG	Voices of the COVID Generation

1. Introduction

Economic, social, and technological transformations are linking us in unprecedented ways; we are more connected than ever before. These changes have impacted the educational landscape that demands the education systems of the world to produce globally-minded citizens who are able to promote mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence.

Against an increasingly globalised and interconnected world, interest in promoting GCED has been growing. GCED is based on rights, responsibility, and action. GCED is a 21st-century approach to address global challenges based on the principles of global responsibility and accountability applied in everyday local actions and context in this interconnected and dynamic world. Dialogues in Malaysia on the promotion of GCED among policymakers, educationists and practitioners are gaining momentum with the aim of ensuring that education is more equitable and inclusive so as to enable students to acquire the necessary skills and competencies in addressing issues on globalisation such as racism, diversity and social justice.

2. Overview of the Country Profile

Malaysia's population is 32.7 million, which has grown at an average annual rate of 0.8% from 31.6 million in 2016. A key feature in the demographic composition is characterised by its multi-ethnic communities. The Bumiputeras (the Malays and the indigenous) make up about 70% of the total population, while the Chinese make up 24%, the Indians 7%, and other races 1%. About 2.9 million of the population is made up of non-citizens, mainly temporary foreign workers, as well as refugees, asylum seekers, undocumented or stateless persons, and those with unknown status. A recent study indicated that the number of poor households increased to 639.8 thousand households in 2020 as compared to 405.4 thousand households in 2019. The incidence of absolute poverty also increased from 5.6% in 2019 to 8.4% in 2020.

Malaysia is an upper-middle-income country.¹ In 2019, its Gross National Income (GNI) was approximately US\$350 billion or about RM1.47 trillion in current prices; its GNI per capita was US\$10,267. While the GNI declined by 5.6% in 2020 due to the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Malaysia's economic position has not changed. Malaysia is a trading nation, with an estimated trade of 123% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or RM1.7 trillion. Its industrial structure, the manufacturing share of GDP, remained at 22% between 2016 and 2020.

The demand for education is largely demographically determined. Malaysia has a relatively young population, with 23.3% below 15 years of age. Yet, the population is aging rapidly since fertility rates have fallen below replacement levels. Between 2020 and 2030, the proportion of those aged 65 years and over is projected to rise from 7% to 10.7%, while the proportion of those below 15 years is expected to fall to 21.3%. The declining share of the young population may have severe implications for education, the future supply of the labour force, and the health and welfare of the elderly population.

¹The World Bank defines upper-middle-income countries to have a GNI of between US\$4,046 and US\$12,535. See <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/mic/overview>

3. Malaysia's Education – A Brief Background

The Malaysian education system provides 11 years of basic education to every child in the country. The educational structure is 6-3-2, that is, six years of primary education, three years of lower secondary education, and two years of upper secondary education. Since independence, Malaysia has strived towards universal primary and secondary education. While in the past, the education system only provided for nine years of basic education, a reform in the early 1990s extended basic education from 9 years to 11 years. Formal education starts with early childhood education catering to children from the ages of 4+ to 5+, followed by six years of primary education, which is compulsory. The official entry age to primary education is 6+. After completing primary education, students move on to lower secondary education (Forms 1-3) and then complete two years of upper secondary education before finishing eleven years of school.

Post-secondary education may be pursued through a two-year Form 6 programme leading to a certificate or through a one or two-year matriculation programme, which is considered a preparatory year for entrance to university. In total, 12-13 years of schooling serve as the basic entry requirement into the first year of a bachelor's degree programme in higher educational institutions. Universities, as well as colleges and polytechnics, offer diploma-level programmes. Diploma-level graduates can either enter the labour market or proceed to degree programmes at universities.

The diversity of schooling in Malaysia at the time of Independence in 1957 impelled the education system to be developed as a unifying force to unite the citizens of the country in developing the nation economically, socially, and politically. This led to the implementation of the Education Act of 1961, which laid the foundations for the development of the education system. Accordingly, Malaysia's five-year Development Plans have continuously emphasised the importance of education as a means of unifying the nation as well as developing the human resource needs of the country. Under the Education Act of 1961, education policies were formulated after taking into consideration recommendations by several education review committees set up with a view of revamping the fragmented education system of the British colonial era. The policies were 'national' in the sense that the education system is a centralised system, with a common curriculum and using Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) as the medium of instruction. Vernacular languages, especially Chinese and Tamil, were allowed to be used as the medium of instruction at the elementary level, taking into consideration the aspirations and sensitivities of the multi-ethnic population. The forms and goals of the national education system were further reinforced with the formulation of the National Education Policy and the National Education Philosophy (1988) to strengthen and consolidate the national education agenda and provide the basis for policy development on education.

Since then, several reforms have been introduced to make education and training more efficient, attuned, and responsive to the nation's needs. These brought major changes in tandem with accelerated national development and were supported by new legislative measures formulated to facilitate the realisation of targets set by the Ministry of Education (MOE). The continuation of the education reforms culminates with the introduction of the Education Act 1996, which reiterates specific policies under the Education Act 1961.

3.1 GCED in Malaysia

As mentioned earlier, the National Education Philosophy in Malaysia, which serves as the basis for policy development on education, is in itself a promotion of global citizenship - to produce holistically balanced individuals who are able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, society and the nation as follows:

‘Education in Malaysia is an ongoing effort to further develop the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious, based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens of high moral standards, knowledgeable and competent, and who are responsible and capable of achieving a high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, the society and the nation at large.’

In Malaysia, the promotion of harmony, peace, respect, and cooperation are among the values that underlie the education policy framework. Education in Malaysia is defined through three main goals:

- i) to promote national unity;
- ii) to produce human resources appropriate for national development, and
- iii) to develop a progressive and disciplined Malaysian society.

The need to develop holistic individuals is reaffirmed in the Malaysia Education Blueprint (MEB) 2013-2025, which defines success as nurturing students who leave school with the ability to navigate various issues at various levels with a strong sense of universal values in order for them to make ethical decisions. The importance of developing students who are balanced as global citizens, imbued with core, universal values, and a strong Malaysian identity, is key in the development of a value-driven Malaysian education under Shift 3 of the MEB. Strategies under

Shift 3 are holistic in their approach – promoted through curricular and co-curricular activities.

The MEB uses the National Education Philosophy's vision of a balanced education as its foundation for individual student aspirations, namely:

- i) Knowledge: At the most basic level, every child will be fully literate and numerate. Beyond this, it is important that students master core subjects such as Mathematics and Science and are informed with a rounded general knowledge of Malaysia, Asia, and the world. This would include their histories, people, and geography. Students will also be encouraged to develop their knowledge and skills in other areas, such as the arts, music, and sports;
- ii) Thinking skills: Every child will learn how to continue acquiring knowledge throughout their lives (instilling a love for inquiry and lifelong learning), to be able to connect different pieces of knowledge, and to create new knowledge. Every child will master a range of important cognitive skills, including critical thinking, reasoning, creative thinking, and innovation. This is an area where the system has historically fallen short, with students being less able than they should be to apply knowledge and think critically outside familiar academic contexts;
- iii) Leadership skills: In our increasingly interconnected world, being able to lead and work effectively with others is critical. The education system will help every student reach his or her full potential by creating formal and informal opportunities for students to work in teams and take on leadership roles. In the context of the education system, leadership encompasses four dimensions: entrepreneurship, resilience, emotional intelligence, and strong communication skills;
- iv) Bilingual Proficiency: Every child will be, at minimum, operationally proficient in Bahasa Melayu as the national language and language of unity and in English as the international language of communication. This means that upon leaving school, the student should be able to work in both a Bahasa Melayu and English language environment. The Ministry will also encourage all students to learn an additional language;
- v) Ethics and Spirituality: The education system will inculcate strong ethics and spirituality in every child to prepare them to rise to the challenges they will inevitably face in adult life, to resolve conflicts peacefully, to employ sound judgement and principles during critical moments, and to have the courage to do what is right. The education system also seeks to nurture caring individuals who gainfully contribute to the betterment of the community; and

vi) National identity: An unshakeable sense of national identity, tied to the principles of the Rukun Negara, is necessary for Malaysia's success and future. Every child will proudly identify as Malaysian irrespective of ethnicity, religion or socioeconomic status. Achieving this patriotism requires that every child understands the country's history and shares common aspirations for the future. Establishing a true national identity also requires a strong sense of inclusiveness. This can be achieved through not only learning to understand and accept diversity but to embrace it.

In essence, the core of the MEB is to provide education to pupils of all races with shared values and experiences that accept and embrace diversity by instilling trust, respect, and religious and social tolerance among pupils, which in many ways are linked to the concept of global citizenship.

4. Focus of the Situational Analysis

This situational analysis collated and analysed the current status pertaining to the integration of the GCED component into the Malaysia curriculum. The focus of the analysis was on the integration of the GCED component in the Malaysia primary and national secondary curriculum – Standard Curriculum for Primary Schools (KSSR) and Standard Curriculum for Secondary Schools (KSSM) in six core subjects at primary and secondary levels. In addition to the KSSR and KSSM documents, textbooks at all levels of the six core subjects will also be referred to. This is because textbooks have highly influential representations and interpretations of the curriculum to be taught - both the intended and the implemented curriculums.

4.1 Methodology

This situational analysis was conducted using a content analysis method based on the curriculum developed by the MOE, textbooks, as well as relevant policy documents to analyse the presence and absence of GCED components in the curriculum at both primary and secondary levels. Focused group interviews were also conducted with relevant divisions at the MOE to gain further insights on the development of the curriculum and their views on GCED and its relevance to the curriculum. The analysis is focused on six core subjects - Bahasa Melayu (Malay Language), English Language, History, Geography, Mathematics, and Science at both primary and secondary levels. These documents were analysed using the analytical frameworks and coding scheme developed by IBE-UNESCO in cooperation with international experts in 2017.

5. Curriculum Development in Malaysia

Much effort were directed at improving the quality of education. The national school curriculum underwent many reforms in the 1960s and 1970s, which were still under strong western influence. Hence, the school curriculum, both at primary and secondary levels, went through a total revamp in the early 1980s. The Kurikulum Baru Sekolah Rendah (KBSR), or the New Primary School Curriculum, and the Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah (KBSM), or the Integrated Secondary School Curriculum, were introduced, with a specific focus on the teaching of values in order to enhance individual quality development, as well as to create Malaysian citizens of the future. The focus of teaching and learning was child-centred, characterised by student participation, incorporated in activities both in the classroom as well as co-curricular activities, and combined with a holistic approach to human development. The KBSR focused on the back-to-basics movement, aimed at reducing the previously heavily content-oriented curriculum to concentrate on the three Rs (Reading, wRiting, and aRithmetic). The orientation clearly specified a child-centred approach, which required active student participation and focused on individual differences among students. Teaching activities were designed to especially encourage participation and verbal communication through verbal skills as well as reading and understanding, experiential-based writing, and practical application of mathematical concepts such as additions, subtractions, multiplication, and divisions. Learning would be gained through a variety of experiences, such as group learning or as individuals, depending on the skills, interests, and abilities of the students.

The KBSR was implemented progressively, and the full cycle took seven years, from 1982 to 1988. In 1988, the Integrated Secondary School Curriculum (referred to as KBSM) was introduced as a continuation of the curriculum reform efforts at the secondary level.

In 2011, the MOE once again revised the primary curriculum and introduced the KSSR, which completed its first cycle in 2016. The KSSR was revised in 2017. Simultaneously, the KSSM for Form One students was implemented in 2017. Both the KSSR and KSSM provide learners with a comprehensive set of 21st-century skills and competencies.

5.1 GCED in the National Curriculum

Target 4.7 of the SDG 4 envisions education as the key to achieving the SDGs. Hence the integration of Education for Sustainable Development with GCED elements in the national education agenda needs to be given due consideration. Through a learning agenda enriched with themes such as education for peace and non-violence, human rights, well-being and health – including sexual and reproductive health – sustainable lifestyles, and cultural diversity, education can imbue society with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to build peaceful

and sustainable societies. Educating students on global citizenship has to be holistic in its approach – through formal and informal settings, curricular and extracurricular interventions, and conventional and unconventional pathways to participation.

The national curriculum (KSSR and KBSM) in Malaysia is defined as an educational programme which includes curriculum and co-curricular activities which encompasses all the knowledge, skills, norms, values, cultural elements and beliefs with the aim of developing individual who is physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally balanced as well as to inculcate and develop desirable moral values and the ability to transmit knowledge.

The KSSR and KSSM in Malaysia are standard-based documents that focus on growth, relevant content and context, and sets of goals, aims and objectives. The documents also include teaching methodologies and encouraging teachers to continuously reflect on and review their lessons to ensure students' development through differentiated teaching with greater emphasis on problem-based activities.

The KSSR and KSSM were built on six key areas: Communication, Attitude and Values, Humanities, Self-Skills, Physical and Aesthetic Development, and Science and Technology. These overarching pillars are the main domains that support each other and are enhanced with critical thinking, creativity, and innovation, as illustrated in Figure 1:

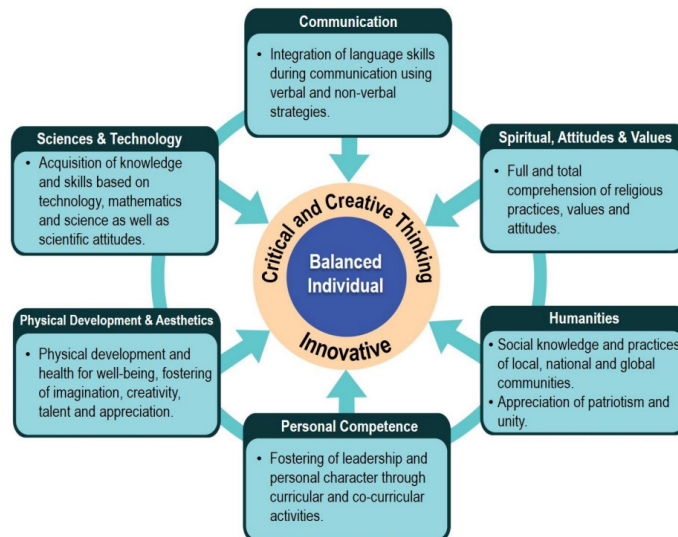


Figure 1: The Standards-Based Curriculum Framework for Primary Schools

These six pillars are interlinked and at the core of the six pillars is the integration of critical and creative thinking and innovative skills critical in the development of balanced individuals who are able to meet the challenges of a diverse, globalised, and dynamic society.

5.2 Integration of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)

The emphasis of HOTS in the KSSR and KSSM is to further strengthen learning by building skills, character, and the ability to learn how to learn and adapt to the learning. This is to ensure the KSSR and KSSM are keeping pace with 21st-century learning through a broader curriculum and deeper understanding of the subject learnt.

HOTS in the national curriculum is the ability to apply knowledge, skills and values in reasoning, reflecting, problem-solving, decision-making, innovating, and creating. In the Standards-Based Curriculum at both levels (primary and secondary), due emphasis has been given to HOTS in all aspects of teaching, learning, and assessment.

HOTS are incorporated through formal and non-formal teaching and learning, curricular, and co-curricular activities to promote critical thinking and creativity, and utilise thinking strategies and reasoning skills. Critical thinking skills refer to the ability to evaluate an idea logically and rationally in order to make a good judgment using logical reasons and evidence. Creative thinking skills refer to the ability to produce or create something new using imagination and thinking out of the box. Reasoning skills refer to an individual's ability to make judgments through logical and rational evaluation. Thinking strategies refer to structured and focused thinking that requires the analysis and synthesis of data or facts to solve problems. There are four broad higher-order thinking skills described in the national curriculum, namely application, analysis, evaluation, and creation. In view of this, the broad elements of HOTS complement GCED's three domains of learning — cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioural. Description of each level of HOTS and its alignment with the GCED domain is as follows:

Table 1: Alignment between HOTS with GCED Domains of Learning

HOTS - KSSR and KSSM		GCED Domains of Learning
Levels	Description	
Application	Using knowledge, skills and values in different situations to complete a piece of work	Cognitive – knowledge and thinking skills necessary to better understand the world and its complexities
Analysis	Ability to break down information into smaller parts in order to understand and make connections between these parts	
Evaluation	Ability to consider, make decisions using knowledge, experience, skills, and values and justify decisions made.	Socio-emotional – values, attitudes and social skills that enable learners to develop affectively, psychosocially, and physically and enable them to live together respectfully and peacefully
Creation	Produce an idea or product using creative and innovative methods	Behavioural – conduct, performance, practical application and engagement

5.3 Student's profile

One of the aspirations in the KSSR and KBSM is to develop pupils with 21st-century skills, which emphasise thinking skills, life skills, and one's career based on values. The 21st-century skills aim at producing pupils with characteristics defined in the Pupils' Profile. Mastery of the Content and Learning Standards in all subjects contribute to the pupils' acquisition of 21st-century skills.

Each of the student's profiles is clearly stated in KSSR and KSSM to help teachers deliver sound knowledge through meaningful teaching and learning processes. These components are also part of the MOE's initiatives to create an informative, innovative, caring, and creative society to be globally competitive and also willing to face the challenges of the 21st century. More importantly, this student's profile is aligned with the GCED student attributes which refer to the traits and qualities that GCED aims to develop²:

- i) Informed and critically literate
 - Know about local, national and global issues, governance systems and structures;
 - Understand the interdependence and connections of global and local connections; and
 - Develop skills for critical inquiry and analysis.
- ii) Socially connected and respectful of diversity
 - Cultivate and manage identities, relationships and feelings of belongingness;
 - Share values and responsibilities based on human rights; and
 - Develop attitudes to appreciate and respect differences and diversity.
- iii) Ethically responsible and engaged
 - Enact appropriate skills, values, beliefs and attitudes;
 - Demonstrate personal and social responsibility for a peaceful and sustainable world; and
 - Develop motivation and willingness to care for the common good.

The alignment of the GCED attributes with each of the student's profiles is not exclusive since some elements in the other GCED attributes are interlinked. However, a broad mapping of the Pupil's Profile and GCED Learner's Attributes is as follows:

² UNESCO identifies and describe the three learner attributes based on a review of the literature and of citizenship education framework. See <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232993>

Table 2: KSSR and KSSM Pupil's Profile and Learner's Attributes

KSSR and KSSM		GCED
Pupil's Profile	Description	Learner's Attributes
Communicator	Pupils are able to voice out their thoughts, ideas and information with confidence and creativity, orally and in written form, using various types of media and technologies.	literacy to access and analyse information with an emphasis on active engagement in learning
Team Player	Pupils are able to co-operate effectively and harmoniously with one another. They share responsibility, respect and appreciate the contributions by each member in the team. They gain interpersonal skills through collaboration, which in turn makes them better leaders and team members.	Socially connected and respectful for diversity – the importance of common factors that transcend difference, and develop the knowledge and skills, values and attitudes required for respecting differences and living with others
Inquisitive	Pupils are able to develop natural inquisitiveness to explore new strategies and ideas. They learn skills that are necessary for inquiry-learning and research, as well as display independent traits in learning. The pupils are able to enjoy continuous life-long learning experiences.	Informed and critically literate - recognise the interconnectedness of local, national and global issues, structures and processes to develop skills for critical inquiry.
Principled	Pupils have a sense of integrity, sincerity, equality, fairness, high moral standards and respect for individuals, groups and the community. They are responsible for their actions, reactions and decisions.	Ethically responsible and engaged - develop attitudes and values of caring for others and the environment; personal and social responsibility and transformation; and developing skills for participating in the community and contributing to a better world through informed, ethical and peaceful action
Informed	Pupils are able to obtain knowledge and develop a broad and balanced understanding across the various disciplines of knowledge. They can explore knowledge effectively in terms of local and global contexts. They understand issues related to ethics or laws regarding information that they have acquired.	Socially connected and respectful for diversity –understand identities, relationships and belonging; shared values and common humanity; develop an appreciation of, and respect for, difference and diversity; and understanding the complex relationship between diversity and commonality.
Caring	Pupils are able to show empathy, sympathy and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They are committed to serving the society and ensuring the sustainability of the environment	Ethically responsible and engaged - develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to care for others and the environment and to engage in civic action which include compassion, empathy, collaboration, dialogue, social entrepreneurship and active participation.
Patriotism	Pupils are able to show their love, support and respect for the country	Socially connected and respectful for diversity – learners understand identities and how they are situated

Source: <http://bpk.moe.gov.my/index.php/terbitan-bpk/kurikulum-sekolah-menengah/category/10-kssm>

6. Elements across the Curriculum

In today's complex and dynamic world, learners need to be exposed to various knowledge from various sources to allow them to make a connection and understand issues at all levels of society. Hence, cross-curricular elements are key components in the KSSR and KSSM. These cross-curricular elements are embedded into the teaching and learning process and are concurrent with the Content and Learning Standards of all subjects. Cross-curriculum elements add value to the teaching and learning process to provide learners with the opportunity to go beyond the classroom and understand the linkages between knowledge that they acquire and real-life situations in their school, community, and beyond, which is key to integrating GCED components. A selection of key elements across the curriculum is provided for teachers to achieve the goals of developing pupils' ability and skills to effectively meet the challenges of the 21st century. These elements are as follows:

Table 3: Description of Elements Across Curriculum

Elements Across the Curriculum
<p>Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The correct usage of the medium of instruction in all subjects should be emphasised · Emphasis on correct language use, as well as focus on pronunciation, sentence structure, grammar, terminology and language registers must be stressed during teaching and learning in order to help pupils develop ideas and communicate effectively.
<p>Environmental Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · This refers to anything that furthers the goal of making life sustainable for the planet, and must be instilled and nurtured in pupils through teaching and learning. · Knowledge about the importance of environmental conservation will cultivate an appreciation of the environment and subsequently affect positive behaviour.
<p>Values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Values are given due emphasis in the teaching and learning process so that pupils understand and practise them in their daily lives. · These values encompass aspects of spirituality, humanity and citizenship.
<p>Science and Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Inculcating pupils' interest in science and technology will accelerate their literacy in science and technology. · The use of technology in teaching and learning will capture pupils' interest thus making teaching and learning effective and fun. · The development of scientific and technological attitudes, approaches and skills is necessary to cope with the rapidly changing environment for problem-solving and decision-making in our daily lives. The use of scientific and technological approaches enhances teaching and learning to meet personal, local and global requirements.

Patriotism and Citizenship

- The importance of instilling good values, knowledge, and the understanding of the duties, obligations and responsibilities of each and every citizen of this country is crucial for the well-being of the country.
- Similarly, patriotism is instilled through pupils' participation in curricular and co-curricular activities. This enables pupils to work together and collaborate towards nation building.

Creativity and Innovation

- Creativity is the ability to use the imagination to gather, comprehend and generate ideas to create something new and original.
- Innovation, on the other hand, is the application of creativity through modification, revision and development of an idea.
- Creativity and innovation are closely related and are vital components for the development of individuals to face the challenges of the 21st century. Through creative and innovative teaching approaches, pupils will display interest, curiosity, excitement and greater growth in learning. Creativity and innovation in pupils should be exploited and nurtured to ensure that their full potential is realised.

Entrepreneurship

- The infusion of entrepreneurship in the curriculum introduces entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and practice to pupils.
- Entrepreneurial mind-set amongst pupils can be fostered through relevant and meaningful activities which inculcate attitudes or qualities such as diligence, honesty and responsibility as well as developing a creative and innovative mind to develop products and propel ideas.

Information and Communications Technology

- Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is intended to ensure pupils apply and enhance their knowledge and ICT skills. Application of ICT will not only drive pupils to be creative but also makes teaching and learning more interesting and fun, and subsequently improves the quality of learning.
- In line with globalisation, ICT-related skills are incorporated into the Learning Standards in all subjects. These skills involve using resources such as multimedia and the Internet in teaching and learning. Some examples of activities that can be carried out include emailing, chatting, blogging and tweeting as well as networking and interacting with electronic software.

Global Sustainability

- This element aims at developing pupils' awareness, knowledge and values relating to global environmental change as well as human well-being and development. These knowledge and values can be applied in these areas; consumerism and sustainable products, global citizenship and unity.
- The acquisition of global sustainability knowledge is imperative in preparing pupils to face the 21st-century challenges at the local, national and global levels.

Financial Education

- The integration of financial education is crucial to develop pupils who are capable of making calculated, sound financial decisions, practising ethical financial management and managing finances with skill and accountability.
- Financial education is given due importance with the introduction of the Consumerism and Financial Awareness theme.

Source: <http://bpk.moe.gov.my/index.php/terbitan-bpk/kurikulum-sekolah-menengah/category/10-kssm>

In most cases, these elements are not explicitly described in the content standard but are more apparent in the textbooks. Further analysis (Table 4) was carried out to evaluate the presence of GCED components in the national curriculum as well as textbooks using the coding scheme of analysis by IBE-UNESCO in the six core subjects, namely Bahasa Melayu, English Language, Mathematics, Science, Geography, and History at primary and secondary levels.

Table 4: Coding Scheme of Analysis

Category	Cognitive Domain	SUBJECTS					
	Sub-Categories	BM	ENG	MAT	SC	GEO	HIST
Human Rights and Peace	Human rights, rights and responsibilities (children's rights, cultural rights, indigenous rights, women's rights, disability rights)	1	1	0	0	1	1
	Freedom (of expression, of speech, of the press, of association/organisation), civil liberties	1	1	0	0	0	1
	Social justice	1	1	0	1	1	1
	Gender equality, gender equity, gender parity, gender-sensitive/responsive	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Democracy/democratic rule, democratic values/principles	1	1	0	1	1	1
	Human rights education; Peace education	1	1	0	0	1	1
	Peace, peace-building	1	1	0	0	1	1
	Awareness of forms of abuse/harassment/violence (school-based violence/bullying, household-based violence, gender-based violence, child abuse/harassment, sexual abuse/harassment)	1	1	0	0	0	0
Global Issues	Globalisation	1	1	0	1	1	1
	Migration, immigration, mobility, movement of people	1	0	0	0	1	1
	North-south relationships, interconnectedness	1	1	0	0	1	1
	Global poverty, inequalities/disparities	1	0	0	0	1	0
	War, conflict, genocide, terrorism	1	1	0	0	1	1
	Migrant, Refugees, Displaced People	1	0	0	0	1	1

Global Issues	Diseases (Ebola, HIV/AIDS)	1	1	0	1	1	0
	Climate change (global warming, carbon emissions/footprint)	1	1	0	1	1	1
	Ecology, ecological sustainability (ecosystems, biodiversity, biosphere, loss of diversity)	1	1	0	1	1	0
	Natural disasters	1	1	0	1	1	1
	Sustainable, sustainability, sustainable development	1	1	1	1	1	1

Category	Socio-emotional Domain	SUBJECTS					
	Sub-Categories	BM	ENG	MAT	SC	GEO	HIST
Multiple Identities, Values and Attitude	Global/international citizen(ship), global culture/identity/community	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Global-local thinking, local-global, think global act local, glocal	1	1	0	1	1	1
	National/local citizenship/identity(ies)/ culture(s)/heritage (include a note if the overall feeling is one of precedence of the national over the international, e.g., maybe find terms such as 'nationalism,' 'patriotism,' 'motherland')	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Multicultural(ism)/intercultural (ism)	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Critical thinking	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Problem solving	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Conflict resolution/management, negotiation	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Collaboration/Collaborating, working well with others	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Respect/appreciation for diversity	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Tolerant/values of tolerance	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Attitudes of care, empathy and compassion	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Solidarity, global solidarity, common humanity (cosmopolitanism)	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Global citizenship education, global education, education for global citizenship	1	1	0	0	1	1

Category	Behavioural Domain	SUBJECTS					
	Sub-Categories	BM	ENG	MAT	SC	GEO	HIST
Engagement, Participation, Actions	Participation/skills to participate at local, national, global levels: Active citizen(ship), civic engagement, constructive participation, serving the community, volunteering	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Socially/ethically responsible/engaged	1	1	1	1	1	1
Pedagogy	Student-centred learning (learner centred, child centred, active methods, project-based methods, democratic/open classroom)	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Peer learning/education (or peer to peer)	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Inclusive education	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Whole-school approach, 'friendly' schools	1	1	1	1	1	1
	(Integrated) Use of ICTs/ social media in learning	1	1	1	1	1	1
Assessment	National/Standard(ised)/summative/ traditional assessment	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Self-assessment, peer assessment/review/ evaluation	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Alternative/customized/differentiated/ creative/authentic assessment, use of portfolios	1	1	1	1	1	1

BM-Bahasa Melayu, ENG-English Language, MAT-Mathematics, SC-Science, GEO-Geography, HIST-History

In ensuring that 21st-century skills are incorporated, pedagogy has to be learner-centred, inclusive, and, where possible, integrate the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Hence, the KSSR and KSSM documents include teaching and learning strategies (which are aligned to GCED pedagogical recommendations) to facilitate teachers in their lesson plans using various pedagogical approaches to ensure effective delivery. Among them are the following:

- i) Inquiry-Based Learning - pupil-centred learning activities based on explorative learning;
- ii) Project-Based Learning – where learners are to find solutions to real-life issues, promotes hands-on, minds-on, and hearts-on activities that lead to the holistic development of pupils and to be ready to face the challenges of the 21st century;
- iii) Pupil-centred classrooms - learning tasks or activities are given to learners geared towards discovery learning, filtering of relevant information from various sources, differentiating facts from fiction and collaborating with one another; and

- iv) Cooperative learning - group work is recommended for activities or tasks to familiarise pupils with the idea of working in teams, learning to manage time, practising soft skills and learning to compromise and collaborate in completing their tasks.

The strategies above are drawn up to guide teachers, and these strategies are not exhaustive nor prescriptive. Teachers are encouraged to combine and use various approaches based on the context and the learner's ability.

In terms of assessment, in 2021, Malaysia abolished the terminal national assessment - the Primary School Achievement Test (UPSR) and, in 2022, the Form Three Assessment (PT3). The abolishment of the UPSR and PT3 is to further strengthen school-based assessment at primary and secondary levels to allow teachers to focus more on formative assessment using various forms of evaluation. However, self or peer evaluation is not included in the school-based assessment. At present, national or standardised assessment is carried out at Grade 11, where learners sit for the Malaysia Certificate of Education.

From Table 4, it can be concluded that GCED components are present in the curriculum of the six core subjects selected. However, the weightage of the GCED components embedded in the curriculum and translated into the textbooks varies. Across the six subjects, the gender-related topic is not present. The topic of violence is mostly limited to bullying and cyber security, and, in most cases, these topics are not discussed in depth. Rather, the focus is on the importance of showing respect to people and accepting differences. Issues on displaced people are minimal (briefly described in the Bahasa Melayu textbook Grade 10), and topics on refugees, genocide, and terrorism are not present or discussed. In all six subjects, the content standard and related topics discussed are context-based, age-appropriate, and arranged in progression. GCED components are highly present in four subjects - Bahasa Melayu, Geography, English language, and History - and the least in the Mathematics curriculum.

6.1 Bahasa Melayu

The Bahasa Melayu subject uses a thematic approach at the primary and secondary levels as follows:

- i) Family;
- ii) Community;
- iii) Health and Well-Being;
- iv) Safety;

- v) Unity;
- vi) Arts, Culture and Aesthetics;
- vii) Self-Identity, Patriotism and Citizenship;
- viii) Science, Technology and Innovation;
- ix) Environment and Green Technology;
- x) Agriculture and Farming;
- xi) Economy, Entrepreneurship and Financial Management; and
- xii) Integrity (Included in Grade 4).

Hence, the high presence of GCED components could be drawn, especially in the textbooks at all levels. Among the key objectives of this subject stipulated in the document is to use the language to communicate to meet one's own needs, acquire knowledge, skills, information, values and ideas, as well as for social purposes in one's daily life (MOE, 2013). The core focus of the Bahasa Melayu is as follows:

- i) Being an active citizen;
- ii) Keeping abreast of a broad political life;
- iii) Bringing closer local communities to the wider world and issues; and
- iv) Ability to responsibly use new communication technologies.

Within the thematic approach and the Bahasa Melayu core focus, GCED components are integrated implicitly – for example, rights and responsibilities of people with disabilities and people displaced and affected by the disaster; freedom of expression through various media; peace education through volunteerism, charity organisation and community activities; sustainable environment and lifestyle; bullying, cyber security; and multiculturalism.

Freedom of speech could be seen through various language activities like debate, public speaking, and the use of various media to voice opinions using Bahasa Melayu proficiently to ensure learners show respect, appreciate diversity, as well as develop a positive attitude, patriotic spirit, and citizenship, which are the main pillars of GCED.

6.2 English language

The English language curriculum at the primary level is organised based on the following principles to make learning more meaningful and purposeful:

i) World of Self, Family and Friends

To increase the awareness of how pupils relate to themselves, their surroundings, family, loved ones and friends;

ii) World of Stories

To expose learners to stories like local fables, folk tales, legends and myths tales around the region as well as the rest of the world to help learners understand different cultural beliefs and learn to live harmoniously with others; and

iii) World of Knowledge

To expose learners to general knowledge about the world, simple scientific and mathematical knowledge, global sustainability, financial literacy, environmental issues, awareness of safety, corruption and other current issues which are appropriate for primary school pupils.

On the other hand, the English language curriculum at the secondary level is developed on five guiding principles to ensure relevance to 21st-century learning, namely:

i) Preparing for the Real World

To prepare learners who are competent, knowledgeable and confident and acquire the relevant skills to function in the real world. This is achieved by making use of real-life issues which are meaningful and “hands-on” in nature for classroom activities and project work. Hence, pupils are able to apply knowledge and skills to real-world settings, which would lead to greater success in their future workplace;

ii) Sustaining Language Use

To sustain the use of the English Language within and beyond the classroom through the adoption of an inter-disciplinary approach, and this is depicted in the four broad themes: namely People and Culture, Health and Environment, Science and Technology and Consumerism and Financial Awareness;

iii) Acquiring Global Competencies

To develop learners who are globally competent and equipped with the relevant skills to investigate the world and how it works, communicate ideas to a diverse audience on various topics through different mediums and rapidly emerging technologies as well as become global players by taking responsibility for their actions and weighing the consequences; and

iv) Acknowledging Pupils' Differences

To use various materials and activities to cater for pupils of different learning styles so that their full potential can be realised;

v) Developing Confident and Competent Communicators

To be able to communicate one's thoughts and ideas in a coherent and cohesive manner through various modes, verbally and non-verbally.

GCED components are also present across both the English language curriculum through topics like religious and cultural celebrations and places around the world to inculcate the understanding of diversity, respect, multiculturalism, inter-culturalism; rights and responsibilities as members of the community; child protection and the media; values and principles as consumers; the use of internet responsibly; communicable diseases like dengue and malaria; awareness on violence like bullying as well as cybercrime; interconnectedness through topics on friendship and politics, sustainable environment, freedom of speech through the responsible use of social media, as well as discussions on one's rights to choices in life.

6.3 History and Geography

The aims of the History curriculum are to cultivate the spirit of loyalty towards the nation and build a sense of pride as a Malaysian. The context of history in the curriculum focuses on local history and links it with historical events worldwide. Key to the teaching and learning of history is for learners to embrace individual values, for example, respect for differences, tolerance, and empathy; political values like democracy, patriotism, and justice; social and community values like fairness, equity, movement of people and, intellectual values like drawing conclusions, recognising facts from fiction and linking historical events to the present time.

The History KSSR is mostly focused on self-identity, values as a Malaysian, respect for others in a multi-racial country, and linking knowledge of history to the current situation. On the other hand, at the secondary level (the KSSM), the topic on Civilisation discusses issues of war and conflict, and differences in governance structure and administration. The topic of the Ice Age implicitly discusses climate change, the movement of people, and the impact of climate change on the life of people. The History of Malaysia starts at Grade 8 onwards, and GCED components that could be drawn are north-south relationships, migration, inequalities, democracy, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding.

Similarly, the presence of GCED components in the geography curriculum at the lower secondary level can be drawn from the topics discussed, for example, rights and responsibilities of

the diverse population and various ethnic as well as the indigenous groups in Malaysia; governance structure and geographical differences between countries in Southeast Asia to show interconnectedness and multiculturalism. Conflict management is also highlighted in the curriculum through topics like natural disasters, water crises, pollution, waste management, diseases, and climate change. In all these topics, values like respect, appreciation of diversity, patriotism, and the ability to make decisions and draw conclusions based on facts and data using geographical knowledge are integrated across topics at all levels.

6.4 Mathematics and Science

On the other hand, components of GCED in the Science curriculum are more focused on aspects of sustainability of the environment, ecology, and ecological sustainability using scientific skills and knowledge to make informed decisions and conclusions. The Mathematics curriculum has the least components of GCED. Attempts to link mathematical skills with a sustainable environment are available but not significantly noticeable.

6.5 Related GCED programmes

The MOE collaborates with several NGOs and government agencies to introduce GCED topics to schools through various programmes and projects. Such partnerships perform an essential service by utilising expertise, innovative methods, and resources outside the MOE to fill in gaps in the formal education system, ranging from environmental protection and sustainable lifestyle to cultural sustainability.

GCED Projects on DELIMa

The GCED Projects embed elements of GCED in teaching and learning. The MOE, in collaboration with UNICEF Malaysia and its partner ARUS Education, went through a series of discussions and processes to integrate GCED elements appropriately. The content of each project was carefully mapped with the Standards-Based Curriculum for Secondary Schools (KSSM), GCED Learning Topics and Learning Objectives, and Education for Sustainable Development Goals Learning Objectives in four subjects – Mathematics, Science, History, and Geography. This is to ensure meaningful teaching and learning processes that do not disrupt the classroom learning environment. Below is an example of the mapping:

Table 5: Example of Mapping between KSSM, SDGs Learning Objectives and GCED Learning Objective in Science Grade 7

Content Standard	Learning Standard	SDG6 Learning Objective	GCED Learning Objective
9.1 The system and structure of Earth 9.2 Composition of the Earth 9.3 Main processes of the Earth 9.4 Geohazard phenomena 9.5 Age of the Earth 9.6 Earth resources and applied geology	9.1.1 Communicate about the system of the Earth. 9.1.2 Explain differences in Earth layers based on its composition and physical characteristics. 9.1.3 Realise that Earth is the only place that can sustain life based on its physical characteristic. 9.2.1 Explain type and characteristic of rocks. 9.2.2 Communicate on how to differentiate the process of rock formation. 9.3.1 Explain the different Earth processes that effect the changes on Earth. 9.3.2 Communicate about exogenic and endogenic processes. 9.4.1 Communicate about geohazard. 9.4.2 Generate ideas on how science and technology are used to prepare for geohazards. 9.4.3 Realise that environmental disasters effect human livelihood. 9.5.1 Communicate about geological time scale of the Earth.	<p>The learner understands water as a fundamental condition of life itself, the importance of water quality and quantity, and the causes, effects and consequences of water pollution and water scarcity</p> <p>The learner understands that water is part of many different complex global interrelationships and systems.</p>	<p>Cognitive Domain: Assess the root causes of major local, national and global issues and the interconnectedness of local and global factors.</p> <p>Socio-emotional Domain: Demonstrate appreciation and respect for difference and diversity, cultivate empathy and solidarity towards other individuals and social groups.</p> <p>Behavioural Domain: Examine how individuals and groups have taken action on issues of local, national and global importance and get engaged in responses to local, national and global issues</p>

	<p>9.5.2 Explain the method to determine the age of the Earth.</p> <p>9.5.3 Communicate about fossils.</p> <p>9.5.4 Reason about the importance of fossils in the advancement of contemporary science.</p> <p>9.6.1 Explain surface water and its risks.</p> <p>9.6.2 Explain the importance of underground water and its risks.</p> <p>9.6.3 Communicate about economic minerals.</p> <p>9.6.4 Explain the formation of petroleum and coal.</p> <p>9.6.5 Communicate about the hydrothermal process.</p> <p>9.6.6 Solve problems about the negative effects of unplanned human activities on all living things on Earth</p>		
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Using the UNESCO publication “Preparing Teachers for Global Citizenship Education” as a reference, the Project-Based Learning approach CREATE was chosen for its action-oriented, student-centred, contextualised, and broad coverage of issues:

Curriculum-based and contextualised theme is chosen – a topic closely aligned with the curriculum.

Real-world issue – Authentic topic and relevant to learners

Expert thinking is needed – the topic should present an open-ended problem to allow HOTS.

Achievable and measurable results – Project goals and expected outputs should be achievable based on the learner’s prior knowledge and has to be age-appropriate

Teamwork – Project has to be carried out collaboratively.

Extending learning time, space, and beyond classroom boundaries – to allow students to learn beyond the classroom to allow impact that students can create

This project is nurturing in its process as it allows students to collaboratively reflect on issues, propose resolutions, and venture beyond the confines of their classroom. These lessons are available online under the Digital Educational Learning Initiative Malaysia (DELIMa) platform at <https://bit.ly/PBL4GCED>.

Voices of the COVID Generation (VOCG)

Education should focus on creating opportunities for children and youth to be active, creative and enthusiastic voices of modern society. The Voices of the COVID Generation (VOCG) programme is an extension of the GCED project. Using a project-based learning approach, VOCC encouraged learners to find connections between four subjects - Mathematics, Science, History, and Geography and to express their emotions, ideas and reflections with regard to their COVID-19 experiences.

VOCC was designed to help students understand the effects of COVID-19 and look beyond its health risks – especially its social impact on the most vulnerable groups, in particular, the psychosocial well-being of children and youth affected by long-term school closures. VOCC served as a platform for them to express their emotions and for adults to grasp and address the harsh impact of the pandemic on children and youth. Details of the programme are available at: <https://www.unicef.org/malaysia/voices-covid-generation>.

Arts-ED-Cultural Heritage Education Programme (CHEP)

Arts-ED, in partnership with George Town World Heritage Incorporated, initiated the Cultural Heritage Education Programme to promote cultural heritage to various stakeholders - local communities, educators, government institutions, and schools in Penang.

CHEP raises awareness of cultural sustainability for the 21st century. The students that CHEP reaches through activities and projects develop critical thinking and skills to appreciate and interpret their cultural heritage creatively. The activities are planned around traditional crafts and

games, culinary innovations, interactive, visual and performing arts.

CHEP trains teachers to use the creative pedagogy of Place-based Learning (PBL) to infuse the school milieu with a sense of cultural heritage. The training includes PBL theory and practice and blending place, community and local resources to make learning for the young engaging and meaningful.

Memperkasakan Amalan Kemenjadian Murid (MAKMur) Project or Fostering Students' Positive Values

The MOE, in collaboration with the Japanese Government under the Look East Policy initiative in basic education through the Japan Technical Cooperation Programme, initiated the MAKMur Project. MAKMur is a process of enhancing the learning environment by providing opportunities for children to realise their potential and develop their character. It sets the foundation for the growth of a child for life through the integration of thought, feeling and behaviour, which are referenced closely to the GCED domains. Description of the elements of MAKMur are as follows:

a. Thought

The ability to learn, understand, think and reflect creatively, innovatively and critically to overcome challenges and make informed decisions in life. Media literacy, entrepreneurship and organisational skills are a part of this element;

b. Feeling

Positive emotions are acquired and nurtured through conscious practices over time to develop good character. These include self-initiative and awareness; empathy; perseverance; social and cross-cultural skills, as well as an appreciation of differences and diversity; and

c. Behaviour

Actions that reflect a continuous effort to adapt and react to the environment rationally. These include collaboration and communication skills, shared responsibility and maturity in decision-making; risk-taking, resilience; and global competence.

The project is currently at its initial stage to be piloted in 15 primary schools. The project will adopt the whole school approach based on three key principles – learning through experience, self-directed learning, and equal opportunities. The focus is on the process of developing a learner who is a team player, flexible, respectful, collaborative, proactive, a leader, motivated, communicates well, appreciates differences, and is able to make informed decisions even at a

very young age. Training of teachers will be based on the toolkit developed, which is ongoing.

In addition to the above collaborations, the MOE is also strengthening collaborations with other government agencies like the Department of Environment, WWF Malaysia and relevant organisations to further advocate for GCED.

6.6 Focus group interviews

Focused group interviews were conducted with relevant stakeholders involved in the development of the curriculum or GCED-related programmes. A few divisions were involved from the MOE – the Educational Planning and Research Division, Education Performance and Delivery Unit, Curriculum Development Division, Technical Vocational Education and Training Division, Special Needs Education Division, and the Islamic Religious Division.

From the session, there was a consensus that non-cognitive domains in the curriculum have to be strengthened, and this has been one of the aspirations under the National Education Policy. Despite the progress Malaysia has made, gaps remain, and with the emerging challenges, students have to be resilient and equipped with the skills to adapt and adopt the dynamics of globalisation. The COVID-19 experience has been a learning curve for everyone in the policy and planning divisions to ensure that education development plans are able to weather various future challenges.

From the interviews, many were not clear on the definition of GCED. In general, many, if not all, associated GCED with Civic Education. Civic Education was launched in 2019 and aims at teaching children to know their rights, responsibilities and moral values so that, as citizens, they are able to contribute to the well-being of society, nation and the world. It is implemented across the curriculum involving the school community – the classroom and beyond. Due to COVID-19 and school closures, the implementation of Civic Education was postponed. With the opening of schools, Civic Education has resumed, and teachers are encouraged to use the manual provided as guidance. It is taught for one hour every fourth week of the month in schools, during the Bahasa Melayu, English, Islamic Studies, Moral, and History lessons. Nationhood and social-emotional aspects of citizenship and actions are embedded into school assemblies, co-curricular activities, and other school programmes.

Many see GCED as important and relevant to the current education scenario. Additionally, 21st century skills have emerged as necessary components of GCED and have been integrated into

the curriculum. Many view that GCED components have to be integrated as they do not emerge in the content or learning standards. As they are only implicitly embedded in textbooks, the onus is on the teachers to use the appropriate approach and resources to ensure meaningful delivery.

Under the MEB 2013-2025, Shift 3: Develop Values Driven Malaysian, the MOE is currently developing a framework on Character Education aimed at developing citizens with strong national identity with global competencies equipped with the foundational universal values. Focus will be on the integration of curricular and co-curricular activities in school and beyond. The framework is holistic and is also a significant entry point to embed GCED components to ensure harmonisation and streamline related programmes related to character building.

7. Key Gaps and Challenges

The progress of mainstreaming GCED in national education policies, curricula, teacher education, and student assessment is reported under Indicator 4.7.1 and monitored as part of the 1974 Recommendations of Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Malaysia's scores in each component were in the upper tercile indicating strong progress, with the highest in teacher education at 0.90 (out of 1) and 0.875 for curricular. These scores show progress and indicate that Malaysia is on the right track regarding the integration of GCED at the policy level.

However, in the Programme for International Student Assessment 2018 assessment on the Global Competence questionnaire, 15-year-old Malaysian students demonstrated lower abilities than the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average by almost all indices, except their interest in learning about other cultures. Malaysian students scored significantly lower in awareness of global issues, respect for people of other cultures, cognitive adaptability, and self-efficacy regarding global issues and perspective-taking.³ On components measuring awareness of intercultural communication and agency regarding global issues, Malaysia's scores were marginally lower than the OECD average. These results were not commensurate with students reporting a slightly higher number of activities on Global Competence compared to the OECD average, with no significant difference between students of different socio-economic statuses.

Attitudes and behaviours on Global Citizenship (GC) were one of the domains measured under the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) 2019. This was carried out through questionnaires distributed to teachers and 11-year-old Malaysian students. The key findings of SEA-PLM showed that Malaysian 11-year-olds showed positive attitudes towards learning GC issues, and the most valued topic is protecting the environment, as this was also the topic most covered in school.⁴ Similarly, teachers showed positive attitudes towards learning GC issues and developing GC skills. However, the analysis also showed that both teachers and 11-year-old Malaysians have a better understanding of local issues than of regional and global ones.

This shows that efforts to embed GCED and Education for Sustainable Development into Malaysian education are already present. Yet, students' relatively low ability to connect real-world issues to their learning and act upon them has to be given more focus.

³OECD 2019, Results from PISA 2018, Country Note – Malaysia.

⁴Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics 2019 (SEA-PLM) – Malaysia National Report.

The overcrowded curriculum has become one of the main challenges to taking GCED into action.

Since GCED is transformative education, the nurturing process of GCED requires teachers to be adept at ensuring relevance and meaningful delivery. GCED cannot be seen as add-ons to the curriculum but need to be part of the process of teaching and learning to ensure it is organically grown in the system.

The Malaysian education system in the past has been very exam-oriented in its approaches and practices. Efforts to strengthen school-based assessment are one of the main focuses in the system for a more holistic approach. Implementation of Education for Sustainable Development will remain a challenge if the school and the community still believe that the quality of education is indicated by a single measure based on pen and paper scores in the national exams.

8. Opportunities and Recommendations

The abolishment of the UPSR in 2021 and PT3 in 2022 is a bold move. Yet, this move is in tandem with global progress towards the school-based assessment. School-based assessment has changed two important dimensions of assessment – from a total reliance on norm-referenced assessments to more emphasis on the criterion-referenced and formative functions of assessment. This will allow teachers to focus more time on learning and growth, and cultivating and developing social-emotional skills through internalising positive values, resilience, and a positive learning environment. Henceforth, this will provide the opportunity to integrate GCED components holistically into the system.

The KSSR and KSSM are well-intended in their aims and objectives and are, in principle, aligned with the GCED aspirations, objectives, and outcomes. Both the KSSR and KSSM have reached their full cycle, and policy and curriculum developers at present are in the process of reviewing them at all levels. Discussions with various stakeholders are ongoing to look into the development of the curriculum for the future. This will be an opportunity to structurally include GCED in the design. However, further deliberation will need to be carried out with the relevant divisions to ensure relevance and alignment with Malaysia's aspirations and vision.

Implementing GCED in schools will have a spiralling effect on the community in general, yet, the degree to which GCED is being fostered in schools is rather marginal and ad hoc in nature. Although the curriculum has integrated the elements of GCED at all levels, this will be rendered useless if delivery in the classroom is not effective. To ensure good delivery and internalisation of the concepts of GCED in education, the role of teachers comes second to none. Investment in teacher training has to be strengthened to ensure effective delivery in the classroom. Teachers require adequate knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to incorporate GCED into their teaching. It is difficult to promote upskilling among teachers who must 'learn, unlearn and relearn' to link classroom content with global issues. Yet, much has to be done to promote greater GCED outcomes.

In addition to the above, resources in the form of textbooks, in particular, have to be made available, and GCED components have to be explicitly included as many teachers in Malaysia, especially those in geographically and socially marginalised areas, rely on textbooks as their source of reference. The use of ICT will add value to the teaching and learning of GCED, and media literacy has to be included in the pedagogy and teacher training as GCED topics are dynamic in nature.

To ensure effective GCED implementation, the approach has to be inclusive in view of the diverse

background of the school population in Malaysia. In addition, the components of GCED have to be carefully selected to ensure its relevance and acceptance at all levels.

Implementation of GCED requires the mobilisation of adequate resources for the purpose of advocacy and raising awareness on the importance of GCED. The schools or, in this case, the government may not be able to provide sufficient resources for effective and meaningful implementation of GCED. Therefore, collaboration between relevant partners and government agencies needs to be coordinated and streamlined to ensure that expertise and resources can be fully utilised.

9. Conclusion

21st-century skills are at the core of the KSSR and KSSM. Development of these skills is instilled through formal and non-formal teaching and learning with the application of HOTS through learner-centred, collaborative, and inquiry-based approaches. GCED is in itself about developing 21st-century skills by linking real-life events and issues at the local, national, and global levels in the teaching and learning processes. From the above discussion, evidence of some GCED components is present in the curriculum within the cross-curricular elements embedded in the topics presented in the textbooks and many are implicitly integrated. Some components, like the protection of the environment and sustainable development, are more apparent than others.

Much is needed to be done to further integrate GCED components into the curriculum, and with the abolishment of the UPSR and PT3 as well as the ongoing review of the curriculum, which focuses on the development of the curriculum for the future, the opportunity to systematically and structurally embed GCED components remains positive and could be further deliberated.

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