

Final Performance Report

Promoting Democracy and Human Rights in Partnership with Islamic Leaders and Organizations in Malaysia



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Center for Civic Education (Center) and its in-country partner, the Malaysian Citizenship Initiative (MCI), completed a two-year program: Promoting Democracy and Human Rights in Partnership with Islamic Leaders and Organizations in Malaysia. Working with university and state education leaders at eight sites in six provinces, MCI—a nonprofit organization affiliated with the Universiti Sains Malaysia and staffed by volunteers from the university—formed partnerships with state education departments, other universities, and teacher training colleges in the six provinces from June 2007 to November 2009. Through these partnerships, MCI provided 258 teachers and principals with the knowledge and resources to implement the Projek Warga civic education curricular program and supported their school-based efforts to increase the democratic knowledge, skills, and dispositions of 720 university students and 4,210 lower secondary students.

This program built MCI's capacity to work with key institutions in the educational sector and to be recognized as a leading Malaysian resource organization in the field of civic education. The positive relationships developed between MCI, state education departments, and other universities have led to institutional acceptance and support of quality civic education programs like Projek Warga—even in areas where local government leadership switched to opposition political parties during the course of this program.

Key program outputs during the two-year period include the following:

- 10 master trainers trained
- 258 pre-service and in-service teachers trained
- 20 university faculty student advisors trained
- 5,089 books distributed to secondary school and university students
- 168 secondary school classes and 33 university groups completed the Projek Warga methodology
- 97% of teachers effectively imparted the concepts and methodology of Projek Warga to students
- 100% of participating students were able to define public policy and describe their role in its formation
- 4,210 secondary students and 720 university students were aptly able to conduct public policy research, as well as develop and explain a public policy solution and action plan
- 100% of participating students have taken at least one civic engagement action

In addition, university and secondary school implementation of Projek Warga facilitated the development of a more democratic culture in participating classrooms and built cooperation between students of different religious and ethnic backgrounds. The participating universities and schools included students of diverse backgrounds, and Projek Warga fostered inter-group collaboration at each site. Participating students worked on group civics projects and had regular opportunities to communicate their ideas to others, listen to others' viewpoints, and build consensus. As a result, local program evaluators found statistically significant positive changes in student attitudes regarding freedom of speech. The local program evaluation also showed that

students appreciated the opportunity to do work that helped their community and, following the program, expressed increased readiness to help solve problems in their community. Projek Warga students gained a better understanding of public policy and the role of the public in civic life. They also reported learning many skills useful in democratic participation including public speaking, group work, gathering information from the Internet and newspapers, and other research, presentation, and cooperative skills.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

The Center and MCI designed the program, Promoting Democracy and Human Rights in Partnership with Islamic Leaders and Organizations in Malaysia, to support DRL's priorities of increasing respect for human rights, promoting the rule of law, strengthening civil society, and promoting independent print and Internet media in Malaysia. The short-term goals of this project focused on implementing the Projek Warga civic education curricular program with Malaysian youth in collaboration with universities, departments of education, and secondary schools in eight project sites. Youth who participate in Projek Warga interact with the media, build respect for human rights, examine existing laws and government implementation of laws, and, as civil society members, learn how to work with government to improve public policy.

Background

Universiti Sains Malaysia professors established the Malaysian Citizenship Initiative in 2003 with the goal of promoting civic and citizenship awareness among the public. MCI is an independent, nongovernmental organization staffed by volunteers from the university. MCI's flagship program is Projek Warga, a uniquely Malaysian adaptation of the Center's Project Citizen curricular program.

The Center's Project Citizen program, used in more than 60 countries, is its most widely adapted and implemented civic education curriculum. It has been recognized as a model democracy education program, promoting competent and responsible participation in local and state government and civil society. Project Citizen engages students in a series of structured, cooperative learning activities guided by teachers and adult volunteers. Working in teams, students learn to interact with their government and community leaders through a five-step process that entails (1) identifying a public policy problem in their community, (2) gathering and evaluating information about the problem, (3) examining and evaluating alternative solutions, (4) selecting and developing a public policy proposal to address the problem, and (5) developing an action plan to bring their proposed solution to authorities with the power to implement it.

From 2004 to 2006, the Center and MCI implemented Projek Warga in Penang secondary schools and piloted the program with Universiti Sains Malaysia students under State Department funding. Promoting Democracy and Human Rights in Partnership with Islamic Leaders and Organizations in Malaysia represents an expansion of Projek Warga to seven new sites, the introduction of the program to additional universities and teacher training colleges, and the development of regional collaboration and sustainable relationships among key educational institutions at all program sites.

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the two-year DRL-funded program were (1) dramatically increasing the implementation of Projek Warga (Project Citizen) for Malaysian lower secondary school and university students in eight Malaysian states or territories; (2) fostering of an intensive interaction among students of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds involved in Projek Warga through the pairing of lower secondary schools with different ethnic and religious demographics; (3) creation of positive, sustainable relationships in civic education, including teacher training, between Malaysian universities (state and religious) and the schools they serve; (4) encouragement of regional cooperation and discussion among those implementing the programs in Malaysia; and (5) establishment of MCI as a center for such discussions and cooperation, thereby strengthening its capacity as a leading citizenship education NGO.

Short-term Goals

- To develop a cadre of teachers who are able and committed to the task of training teachers to teach the Project Citizen methodology in Malaysia
- To ensure that 180 teachers and 40 principals have the resources, knowledge, and willingness to effectively implement the Project Citizen methodology in the MCI Malaysia classrooms

Long-term Goals

- To advance the institutionalization of comprehensive civic education programs in Malaysian schools that foster the development of a political culture supportive of human rights and democracy
- To foster the development of a democratic political culture in Malaysia through collaboration among secondary school students, university undergraduates, and teachers of different religious and ethnic backgrounds in an innovative civic education program
- To increase the knowledge, ability, and willingness of 5,000 lower-secondary and 260 university students in Malaysia to engage in civic activities

Program Administration

Throughout the two years of the program's duration, the Center worked closely with MCI to plan and implement the program and track its results. The Center managed the program overall, communicated regularly with MCI, provided strategic advice and input into activities, worked to ensure compliance with regulations and reporting requirements, and monitored the quality of teacher professional development, student support, showcase events, and all other activities. MCI, the local partner with its offices at Universiti Sains Malaysia in Penang, was responsible for implementing all activities within Malaysia as a sub-recipient of this grant. This included coordinating with local stakeholders, developing relationships with universities and state departments of education, organizing workshops and events, conducting school site visits, providing support to teachers and university faculty advisors, and coordinating the local program evaluation. When questions and challenges arose in regards to implementing the program in Malaysia, Center staff worked closely with MCI to resolve these issues.

In August 2008, Richard Nuccio, Director of Civitas International Programs, and Elba Garcia, Program Manager, traveled to Malaysia to observe program implementation and provide support to MCI regarding administrative issues. Nuccio and Garcia viewed a university-level training workshop, and confirmed the effective dissemination of Projek Warga's content and interactive methodology. They interacted with the university participants, answered questions about Project Citizen in the local policy context, and made a key presentation on developing an effective policy solution and action plan. Also during this visit, Nuccio and Garcia met with MCI program staff in Penang and Kuala Lumpur to discuss effective program implementation and address recently emerging administrative issues, including difficulties reporting results and financial expenditures in a timely manner. Together, the Center and MCI developed a revised program timeline, and MCI was able to ensure adequate staffing to maintain the required reporting schedule from that point forward.

EVALUATION OF IMPACT ACCORDING TO PROGRAM GOALS

This section provides an evaluation of impact according to the aforementioned short-term and long-term program goals, including the target outputs set forth in the approved Statement of Work. The results reported come from observations made by Center and MCI staff, classroom implementation site visits, event records, and local program evaluations conducted in each year of the program. *Please also refer to the Performance Monitoring Plan, which summarizes all quantitative data in a chart format.*

Short-term Goal I: To develop a cadre of teachers who are able and committed to the task of training teachers to teach the Project Citizen methodology in Malaysia.

In order to develop strong Projek Warga implementation in schools and the potential for long-term sustainability, one key program goal was to develop teachers with the skills and commitment to train other teachers in Projek Warga. MCI used its existing cadre of trainers—professors and volunteer staff from Universiti Sains Malaysia who had been trained by expert Center trainers through previous funding streams—to provide teacher training and support during the course of this project. In the first year of this project, MCI trained five new master trainers and worked with 10 university faculty advisors at Universiti Sains Malaysia and 48 secondary school teachers and principals from Penang and two sites in Seberang Perai (Utara and Selatan). In the second year of the program, MCI trained five new master trainers and worked with 123 in-service teachers, 87 pre-service teachers, and 10 additional university faculty advisors from eight institutions in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur. A number of strong teachers effectively implemented the program and could also become trainers in future years.

The following sub-sections provide an analysis of activities and outputs according to the items listed under Short-term Goal I in the approved Statement of Work for this program.

A) Training 220 teachers in the first year

Target Output: 220 teachers

Actual Output: 258 teachers, including 48 teachers in the first year and 123 in-service and 87 pre-service teachers in the second year.

MCI trained a total of 258 secondary-level teachers in Projek Warga. Forty-eight teachers from three sites were trained in the first year and 123 in-service and 87 pre-service teachers from five sites and three teacher preparation programs were trained in year two. MCI organized local in-service workshops for all teachers in a particular district immediately prior to classroom implementation. Thus, teachers from three sites were trained in the first year, and teachers from the sites that began implementation in year two were trained in that year.

Having had significant cost savings in program travel and workshop costs, MCI was able to add a training workshop for pre-service teachers to its workplan in year two. The first-ever Projek Warga pre-service teaching training workshop took place at Sultan Idris Education University in Perak, August 16–19, 2009. Eighty-seven pre-service teachers from Universiti Sains Malaysia, Sultan Idris Education University, and Institut Perguruan Bahasa Melayu Malaysia, a teacher training college in Kuala Lumpur, participated in the four-day workshop.

All trainees reported that they were very interested in Projek Warga and noted its applicability to most subject areas, particularly those which require the development of research portfolios.

Table 1: Selected Reflections from Participants in the Pre-service Teacher Workshop

“I find that decision making is not easy, especially when everyone has their own ideas on how a problem should be solved. The training is really good; it teaches us not only to raise issues on a problem but to also come up with suggestions and ideas on how the problem can be solved.”

“I am very pleased with the opportunity to attend this training. It allows me to be more critical of what’s going on around us and the role I need to play as part of the community. The training also allows me to meet trainee teachers from other institutions and to share on the differences and similarities of our training.”

“After the training, I now understand more about public policy and public issues. We, as the community, are part of the government and therefore responsible in assisting the government to solve some of the community problems.”



Pre-service teachers discuss Projek Warga at the August 2009 workshop.

B) Training 15 master trainers who are able to effectively articulate the concepts and methodologies of Projek Warga in the first year target areas

Target Output: 15 master trainers in the first year

Actual Output: 5 new master trainers, plus 7 existing trainers provided with additional training

MCI made use of its existing cadre of Projek Warga trainers to train teachers in year one and conducted a refresher workshop for seven of their existing trainers to ensure the highest quality of training. MCI also trained five new master trainers who then worked alongside existing trainers to effectively impart the Projek Warga methodology to teachers in year two. Based on the scale of the project and the existence of master trainers prior to this program, MCI modified the output of new trainers needed from 15 to five. Project funds that would have been used to prepare trainers were then used to support other project activities.

C) Training 12 university faculty student advisors in the second year

Target Output: 12 university faculty student advisors

Actual Output: 20 university faculty student advisors in the first and second year

MCI trained 10 university faculty advisors from Universiti Sains Malaysia in Projek Warga in the first year and 10 university faculty advisors from eight additional universities in year two. Early in the second year of this program, MCI invited representatives from nineteen universities and colleges to a briefing on Projek Warga. All of the institutions were interested, and eight committed to participate in training. The universities participating in the year two training workshop included: Tunku Abdul Rahman University (Kuala Lumpur), Asia Pacific University College of Technology and Innovation—Bukit Jalil (Kuala Lumpur), Malaysia University of Science and Technology (Petaling Jaya, Selangor), Tenaga National University (Hulu Langat, Selangor), International University College of Technology Twintech (Kuala Lumpur), Management and Science University (Shah Alam, Selangor), Sunway University College (Petaling Jaya, Selangor), and Kuala Lumpur Metropolitan University College (Kuala Lumpur). In addition to the faculty advisors themselves, the universities brought 8 student leaders to the workshop.

Projek Warga was successfully implemented in Universiti Sains Malaysia in year one and in seven additional universities in year two. Participating university students commented, on post-implementation surveys, that they had become more aware of community problems and public policies, enhanced their communication and teamwork skills, learned to appreciate the importance of political and cultural tolerance, and felt more responsible for the problems in their communities.

Table 2: Selected Reflections from Participating University Students

“Before the project, I was not interested in laws; after joining the project, I got to know a few things about laws and by sharing opinions, we gained a lot more knowledge.” Komathi Kaliappan

“I personally have learnt that public policies on any matter has to be upgraded and refined over time to meet the demands of the present times. In solving the nation’s quandaries, we have to specially cater for the demands of the people and the new times. Public policies cannot just be copied and pasted from one country to another as different needs need to be met within those countries.” Shoma Kaur

“I have learned to communicate more efficiently with my team mates and I have learned to be more subjective to receive opinion and ideas from my mates.” Veronica Choong Wai Han

“Skill that I learned was communication skills with different parties and organizations which also tested my patience due to many circumstances.” Charan Jit Singh

“Current policy needs amendment and more students should be involved in contributing to a better policy.” Mohd Norizam Mohd Yusof

“I learned that we as members of society should help the government in handling social problems. The least we can do is to try to increase our awareness towards the problem and prevent ourselves from engaging in such activities.” Ooi Er Hern

D) Training 12 master trainers who are able to effectively articulate the concepts and methodologies of Projek Warga in the second year target areas

Target Output: 12 master trainers in the second year

Actual Output: 5 master trainers in the second year

MCI trained five new master trainers in year two. Based on the scale of the project and the existence of master trainers prior to this program, MCI modified the output of new trainers needed from 12 to five. Project funds that would have been used to prepare trainers were then used to support other project activities.

Short-term Goal II: To ensure that 180 teachers and 40 principals have the resources, knowledge, and willingness to implement effectively the Project Citizen methodology in the MCI Malaysia classrooms.

Through this program, a total of 171 current secondary school teachers and principals, 87 pre-service teachers, and 20 university administrators were trained to implement Project Warga with students. MCI supported secondary school classroom implementation in eight sites by developing strong relationships with local departments of education and school leaders. For each site, MCI followed a similar path to implementing the program and providing resources and support to teachers as follows:

- MCI met with state department of education leaders to secure their approval for local schools to participate in the program.
- MCI met with school principals and leaders of schools that planned to participate.
- MCI organized a three-day interactive training workshop for teachers.

- MCI organized three roundtable discussions with stakeholders (including teachers and student leaders) at key points during the twelve-week curricular implementation period.
- MCI staff made one field visit to each school, which included classroom observation and interviews with students and teachers.
- MCI organized a culminating portfolio showcase, where all local student groups presented their projects to an audience of the other students, teachers, educational leaders, and community members.

Through this strong system of support, which included multiple feedback loops between MCI and the participating students and teachers, nearly all trained teachers successfully implemented Projek Warga with secondary school students. In Malaysia's educational culture of teacher-centered and traditional methodologies, the success of MCI in training and supporting teachers to effectively carry out a student-centered, project-based curriculum is quite an accomplishment. Participating teachers were trained to re-evaluate their role in the classroom, see themselves as facilitators rather than authoritarian leaders, and introduce democratic discourse into the classroom. Taking this new approach to teaching was a struggle for many, but with the regular support of MCI, the teachers were able to carry out the curriculum in such a way that supported the development of participatory skills in students.

The following sub-sections provide an analysis of activities and outputs according to the items listed under Short-term Goal II in the approved Statement of Work for this program.

A) Distributing and ensuring the utilization of 2,500 student textbooks and 300 teachers' guides during the first year in the target areas

Target Output: 2,500 student books and 300 teachers' guides

Actual Output: 1,271 books

MCI provided student books and teachers guides for all classes participating in year one. Originally, the Center and MCI had planned for 2,500 students from four out of eight program sites to participate in year one. The program began in three sites in the first year with 740 secondary school students and 400 university students participating. For several reasons, MCI adapted its timeline for working with a fourth site in year one. First, MCI was unable to meet with state education officials in the areas of Perak and Kedah due to a national general election in March 2008. Then, because new state administrations were elected to office, local education officials were unsure of their positions and changes in policy that were expected to take place. These officials were thus unwilling to meet with MCI in the ensuing months to discuss this new project. For the other potential sites, it had grown too late in the school year to fit the program into the calendar. MCI decided to implement the program in the five remaining sites during year two.

Additionally, student numbers in year one were lower than expected within the three sites: some schools that initially expressed interest in the program withdrew due to perceived logistical difficulties in partnering with other schools to complete the Projek Warga group portfolios. MCI worked more closely with schools in year two to ensure that all schools that initially signed on to the project followed through in carrying out the program.

B) Ensuring that 110 classes complete the Projek Warga methodology in the first year

Target Output: 110 classes

Actual Output: 47 secondary school classes and 20 university groups

Forty-seven secondary school classes and 20 university groups completed the Projek Warga methodology in year one. This was lower than originally planned due to political developments that delayed implementation in some sites and the dropout of some schools that were initially interested, as outlined under Activity A above. MCI planned to reach a higher number of secondary schools and university groups in year two in order to meet the overall goal of reaching 5,000 students.

C) Ensuring that 70% of teachers are able to effectively impart the concepts and methodologies of Projek Warga to students in their classroom during the first year in target areas

Target Output: 70% of teachers complete the project

Actual Output: 88% of teachers complete the project

Eighty-eight percent of teachers trained in year one effectively completed the Projek Warga methodology with students in their classroom.

D) Distributing and ensuring the utilization of 2,500 student textbooks and 300 teachers' guides during the second year

Target Output: 2,500 student textbooks and 300 teachers' guides

Actual Output: 3,818 books

Three thousand seven hundred ninety-one Projek Warga books were distributed in year two. 3,470 secondary school students and 320 university students completed the Projek Warga methodology that year.

E) Ensuring that 110 classes complete the Projek Warga methodology in the second year

Target Output: 110 classes

Actual Output: 121 secondary school classes and 13 university student groups

One hundred twenty-one secondary school classes and 13 university student groups completed the Projek Warga methodology in year two, exceeding the originally planned target output. As mentioned previously, MCI worked with five new sites in year two including: Kuala Lumpur, Klang (Selangor), Petaling Perdana (Selangor), Perak, and Kedah. In these sites, nearly all schools that expressed interest continued with the program and many more students participated at each school.

F) Ensuring that 70% of teachers are able to effectively impart the concepts and methodologies of Projek Warga to students in their classroom during the second year in target areas

Target Output: 70% of teachers complete the project

Actual Output: 100% of teachers complete the project

One hundred percent of teachers trained in year two effectively completed the Projek Warga methodology with students in their classroom.

Long-term Goal I: To obtain the institutionalization of comprehensive civic education programs in Malaysian schools that foster the development of a political culture supportive of human rights and democracy.

MCI worked very closely with state departments of education, local educational institutions, universities, and teacher training colleges throughout this two-year program to build support for civic education implementation and institutionalization in Malaysian schools. In each secondary school program site, MCI first approached state departments of education to ensure their understanding and approval of Projek Warga as an innovative, active, learner-centered civic education curricular program that fosters the development of a democratic political culture. With the state education department's approval, MCI worked with local districts and introduced the ideas of interactive and comprehensive civic education to school leaders and principals. With local leaders on board, MCI then began teacher training and regular support for program implementation. Throughout the course of the program, MCI involved the local stakeholders in roundtable meetings and in culminating local student portfolio showcase events.



Recognition ceremony at the local showcase in Perak, October 2009



Recognition ceremony at the local showcase in Klang, June 2009

The successful implementation of Projek Warga in schools and universities served as a further testament to the positive benefits of civic education that fosters democratic skills and dispositions. From program initiation to November 30, 2009, eight universities and 94 secondary schools worked with MCI and local educational stakeholders to successfully implement Projek Warga with their students. Secondary school projects were completed in eight areas of Malaysia—Penang, Seberang Perai Utara, Seberang Perai Selatan, Kuala Lumpur, Klang, Petaling Perdana, Kedah, and Perak—with a high level of commitment from schools since Projek Warga is in line with the Ministry of Education’s request for schools to have student projects involving the community. Additionally, MCI worked with Sultan Idris Education University in Perak and other Malaysian teacher training colleges to offer training to 87 pre-service teachers. Overall, participating students, teachers, university facilitators and administrators, and representatives of the departments of education have reflected positively on the experience.

Through this project, MCI has become known in the six provinces as a leading Malaysian NGO that serves as a resource for training and civic education curriculum for schools, universities, and teacher training institutions. Following program implementation, MCI is maintaining communication and collaboration with key stakeholders. At all participating universities, there has been a strong interest in continuing to use Projek Warga with new cohorts of students in subsequent academic years. Several sites plan to continue with Projek Warga and have asked MCI for further teacher training. In November 2009, MCI staff prepared informational binders for each state department of education where Projek Warga was implemented in the 2009 school year (Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Kedah, and Perak). The binders include summary information on the program and details about each student project. The binders will enhance the existing communication between MCI and the departments of education and will help ensure institutional memory about Projek Warga at the departments.

Long-term Goal II: To foster the development of a democratic political culture in Malaysia through the collaboration among secondary school students, university undergraduates, and teachers of different religious and ethnic backgrounds in an innovative civic education program.

MCI emphasized collaboration among secondary school students, university undergraduates, and teachers of diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds in all phases of the program. Students participating in Projek Warga reflect the ethnic diversity of their communities and include a mix of students from Chinese, Indian, and Malay ethnic backgrounds. The Projek Warga curriculum fosters rich collaborative interaction amongst participating students as they work together to select a single public policy topic, conduct research in their community, meet with local officials, design a policy proposal, and put together the portfolio that demonstrates their project work. Students must discuss their viewpoints, listen to the opinions of others, and build consensus in order to make decisions as they complete their projects. These interactions occur in small working groups as well as in whole-group situations and in meetings with local officials and civil society members.

Additionally, each student group has the opportunity to interact with the diverse students from other schools at local culminating portfolio showcases, in which all classes from the area participate. At the showcases, each group presents their work in a formal presentation format. Students have opportunities to interact formally and informally at the event. The Projek Warga showcase provides a forum for students of different backgrounds to come together to discuss local issues that matter to them, their ideas for policy solutions, and their experiences conducting the project.

The chart below details the ethnic and gender breakdown of participating secondary school students in Kedah, one of the eight program sites. Each site has a different breakdown that roughly reflects the diversity of the region. This example illustrates the diversity that existed among participating students.

Table 3: Breakdown of Students in Kedah by Language Category, School, Ethnicity, and Gender

	SCHOOLS	Ethnicity (%)			Gender (%)	
		Malay	Chinese	Indian	Male	Female
	<i>English Category</i>					
1	SMK Khir Johari	60	25	15	45	55
2	SMK Tunku Ismail	20	55	25	55	45
3	SMK Sungai Pasir	60	35	5	60	40
4	SMK Sin Min (Chinese F)	10	85	5	0	100
5	SMK Bandar Sungai Petani	50	30	20	45	55
6	SMK Aman Jaya	60	35	5	25	75
7	SMK Sungai Layar	80	20	0	55	45
8	SMK Taman Ria Jaya	55	20	25	55	45
9	SMK Bakar Arang	40	40	20	35	65

10	SMK Dato' Bijaya Setia	80	20	0	35	65
11	SMK Convent Father Barre	35	50	15	100	0
12	SMK St Theresa	40	40	20	0	100
13	SMK Ibrahim	60	20	20	100	0
	Malay Category					
1	SMK Khir Johari	80	15	5	40	60
2	SMK Tunku Ismail	60	25	15	55	45
3	SMK Sungai Pasir	75	15	10	70	30
4	SMK Sin Min (Chinese F)	10	90	0	0	100
5	SMK Bandar Sungai Petani	60	30	10	50	50
6	SMK Aman Jaya	45	35	20	30	70
7	SMK Sungai Layar	85	15	0	65	35
8	SMK Taman Ria Jaya	45	30	25	55	45
9	SMK Bakar Arang	40	40	20	60	40
10	SMK Dato' Bijaya Setia	60	35	5	55	45
11	SMK Convent Father Barre	45	50	5	100	0
12	SMK St Theresa	45	40	15	0	100
13	SMK Ibrahim	70	20	10	100	0

Local evaluators, who surveyed secondary school students in year two, found statistically significant changes in student attitudes regarding freedom of speech, an important component in a democratic political culture. Having learned to better communicate their ideas with others and to listen to differing viewpoints from students of various backgrounds, students felt more strongly about a person's freedom to express one's opinion and to dress how they wish. After participating in the program, students increasingly agreed with the statement that a person should be allowed to state what he wishes to say even if he is clearly wrong.

During focus group interviews, students identified group work skills, patience, and the importance of cooperating with others amongst the numerous things they learned while participating in Projek Warga. The following are selected quotes from student reflections.

Table 4: Secondary Student Reflections on Collaborative Aspects of Projek Warga

"It was fun doing this project with a bunch of people who I don't really know, but they're great. I made new friends, and I learnt to be more patient. I learnt to put our hands together and work hard."

"After finishing this folio, we have all learnt the importance of good communication and cooperation skills. We also learned how to share ideas efficiently as a group and how to evaluate our ideas."

"Teamwork worked well for us. We had more voices to listen to, more ideas to reconsider, more listeners to judge our ideas honestly, more quality in our work."

“I think that people who are good at solving problems are usually creative and open-minded. They come up with a variety of solutions, then choose the best one. Sometimes it’s a good idea to seek other people’s point of view when solving problems to give us a new or different perspective of the issues, making us understand it more.”

Long-term Goal III: To increase the knowledge, ability, and willingness of 5,000 lower secondary and 260 University students in Malaysia to engage in civic activities.

Approximately 4,210 secondary students and 720 university students have engaged in civic activities using the Projek Warga methodology during the course of this grant. Overall, students have demonstrated increases in their civic knowledge and skills and enhancement of their civic values as reported from surveys of students and focus groups conducted with students and teachers. In year two, local evaluators administered pre- and post-implementation surveys to 1,432 secondary school students and conducted focus group interviews with 14 student groups from four out of eight program sites.

Table 5: Summary of Secondary Student Participation

Implementation Cycle	Secondary Schools	Teachers/Principals	Students
February–June 2008	24	48	740
February–June 2009	44	71	2450
July–October 2009	26	52	1020
Totals	94	171	4210

Table 6: Summary of University Student Participation

Implementation Cycle	Universities/University Colleges	University Faculty/Administrators	Students
September 2007–February 2008	1	10	400
December 2008–March 2009	8	10	320
Totals	9	20	720

The following sub-sections provide an analysis of outputs according to the items listed under Long-term Goal III in the approved Statement of Work for this program.

A) Seventy percent of participating students overall are aptly able to define public policy and describe their role in its formation

Target Output: 70% of participating students
Actual Output: 100% of participating students

By participating in Projek Warga, students gained a better understanding of what public policy is as well as the role of the public in policy formation. Local evaluators conducted focus group discussions with 14 student groups in year two and found that all students completing the

program were able to describe public policy and identify its components. In written pre- and post-implementation surveys of 1,432 students, evaluators found statistically significant changes in student understanding of the role of the general public in influencing the formation of public policy. By participating in *Projek Warga*, students recognized that the public had more of a role in policymaking than they had previously thought. For instance, students realized that the public can influence policy through means other than voting and that the public can criticize a policy even after the policy has been enacted. The following are some reflections from students about the public policy component of their *Project Warga* experience.

Table 7: Secondary School Student Reflections on Public Policy

<p><i>“Our group learnt that public policies are defined as courses of action or inaction taken by the government and are used for decision-making of specific issues.”</i></p> <p><i>“Honestly, before <i>Projek Warga</i> came along I never really bothered to do research or have the curiosity to ponder about our country’s public policies. I think our country has a pretty good law and policy system... But every country has weakness, including us, and that’s where we step in to help (or at least try to) improve our country and its policies.”</i></p> <p><i>“I have learned that the policy and the acts play an important role in our lives in order to solve many problems faced by our community.”</i></p> <p><i>“I found that...there are many policies which have been issued by the government, yet not all of them are enforced correctly, and to be quite frank, some do not work.”</i></p> <p><i>“What I personally learned about public policy from working with my friends is that we need teamwork to make a policy a success.”</i></p>

B) 5,000 participating students and 260 university students overall are aptly able to conduct public policy research, as well as develop and explain a public policy solution and action plan

Target Output: 5,000 secondary students and 260 university students

Actual Output: 4,210 secondary students and 720 university students

Four thousand two hundred and ten secondary students and 720 university students successfully completed their *Projek Warga* portfolios, demonstrating their ability to conduct policy research, develop a policy solution, and articulate an action plan for trying to get the policy enacted. All student work was reviewed by MCI, which evaluated student project documentation binders prior to each local culminating showcase event. At the showcase, students had the opportunity to give formal oral presentations of their research and policy solutions to the audience of MCI evaluators, other students, education officials, and community members. Additionally, MCI was able to provide students with feedback on their work.



Participants and audience at the Klang local showcase, June 2009



Students present their policy project, Klang showcase, June 2009



Students present their policy project, Petaling Perdana showcase, June 2009



Evaluators provide feedback on student portfolios, Klang showcase, June 2009

C) Seventy percent of participating students overall actively take at least one civic engagement action

Target Output: 70% of participating students

Actual Output: 100% of participating students

During the course of the project, all participating students conducted civic engagement action by meeting with local officials and/or civil society members to develop in-depth knowledge of local problems, build their understanding of existing policies, and build local support for their proposed policy solution. Results of pre- and post-implementation surveys demonstrate that students developed an increased awareness of problems in their community as a result of the program, and that they are interested in helping solve these problems.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED IN IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM

The success of this program, as well as the potential for long-term support for comprehensive civic education programs, depended upon the participation and buy-in of education officials and leaders at multiple levels and in multiple institutions. One of the biggest challenges in implementing this program was the need to adjust the work plan and implementation methods to accommodate political realities and delays in meeting with state departments of education. Political developments in Malaysia led to significant delays in securing meetings with state departments of education in Perak and Kedah, two of the eight areas of Malaysia where secondary school implementation was planned. With the political opposition in these areas winning 2008 elections, the heads of state departments of education were subsequently re-assigned. It then took the departments of education some time to re-organize their leadership, and in the meantime, the state departments were not prepared to hold meetings with MCI. While MCI had hoped to begin programs in these sites in year one, implementation had to be postponed well into year two due to the importance of working through the state education departments. In the meantime, MCI began to work closely with Sultan Idris Education University to build support for civic education implementation in Perak. Sultan Idris Education University, impressed with Projek Warga, provided MCI with contacts in the state department of education, and a meeting was secured in July 2009. Once meetings were held with the Perak and Kedah

education departments in 2009, the departments promptly gave their approval for the programs to go forward, approving MCI's communication with public school principals and subsequent training of teachers. The buy-in of state departments of education was essential to MCI's successful communication with principals and teachers and enabled program implementation to progress smoothly from that point forward. Though it took longer than expected to engage state education officials, the ultimate buy-in of all key stakeholders was worth the effort and timeline adjustments.

Though MCI is spearheaded by a group of highly capable and visionary leaders from Universiti Sains Malaysia, MCI also faced challenges in its internal administration of the program. These problems arose from MCI's practice of making use of volunteers to staff their organization rather than having permanent professional staff. On one hand, those who volunteer are highly motivated to provide community service, and Universiti Sains Malaysia recognizes their leadership in this area. The civic education trainers and curriculum experts, in particular, have continued to work with MCI for a number of years. On the other hand, several staff in charge of project management and administrative tasks left MCI because they found work elsewhere. This presented challenges to the continuity of MCI's financial reporting and data collection for this program. Work was sometimes left unfinished if a staff member left, and that work then had to be reviewed and completed by MCI leadership in order to meet reporting requirements. This placed a strain on the leaders of MCI, and, at one point during the program, resulted in late reporting. The Center worked closely with MCI during the course of this project to provide support for effective reporting and advice in their efforts to balance the demands of program implementation and record keeping. For the future, MCI's board is considering the hiring of one permanent staff member should adequate funding be available.

ASSESSMENT OF THE OVERALL IMPACT

Through this program, MCI has emerged as a strong local NGO leader in civic education curricular programs and educator professional development. MCI has proven its capacity to bring together education leaders in support of civic education and to provide strong training, monitoring, and support for teachers as they make their first attempts to engage Malaysian youth in project-based, learner-centered civic education that develops skills for democratic participation and the promotion of human rights.

The immediate results of the program were substantial: nine universities and 94 secondary schools worked in collaboration with MCI to implement civic education programs, 258 teachers and 20 university faculty advisors were trained, and 4,210 secondary students and 720 university students successfully completed the Projek Warga methodology. Numerous educational leaders now understand and are supportive of learner-centered civic education that fosters the development of a democratic political culture. Teachers have learned to make use of interactive methodology and introduce democratic practices into their classrooms. Students have learned research, writing, public speaking, group work, communication, political advocacy, consensus building, and other skills important to democratic participation. The program has shown them the importance of participation in the democratic system, increased their respect for the rights of others, and empowered them to improve their communities through civic action.

THE FUTURE OF PROJEK WARGA IN MALAYSIA

Universiti Sains Malaysia continues to support the participation of faculty as trainers and leaders of MCI as part of its community outreach goals and interest in sustainable development. MCI's board has met to discuss future directions. With some funding from USM and seeking funding through outside sources, MCI will continue to provide its curricular expertise and professional development programs to universities and school districts. MCI will continually follow up with all participating sites, including the state education departments and school leaders, to support Projek Warga implementation and encourage the inclusion of more comprehensive civic education throughout students' educational experience.

