



## **B40 families to receive aid through collaboration between Zurich Malaysia, Z Zurich Foundation and Epic Society**

Kuala Lumpur, 19 May 2020 – The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic has brought about a major shift in the way people live and work. The evolving socio-economic situation has been disrupted as people adjusted to new norms, while those who rely on manual or daily wage work have suddenly found themselves with intermittent or no income. In response to the pressing needs faced by low-income communities, Zurich Malaysia together with Z Zurich Foundation has stepped in to provide support and assistance to impacted Malaysian families in the B40 category.

Z Zurich Foundation has donated RM 1 million to Epic Society, a local non-profit organisation, to boost the **COVID-19 Collective for Orang Asli initiative**; a two-pronged relief and recovery programme for the Orang Asli communities. A portion of the funds is allocated to supplement ongoing relief work, which focuses on the distribution of essential food items as well as hygiene kits containing items such as sanitisers, soaps, face masks and over-the-counter medicines. The aid will be distributed to approximately 4,000 Orang Asli families in Peninsular Malaysia from now until June 2020.

The recovery stage will utilise a major portion of the funds to promote health and hygiene awareness, as well as to improve access to education and economic opportunities. Recovery efforts, which are expected to take place concurrently with the relief work until the end of the year, will positively impact the lives of Orang Asli families across multiple communities.

Zurich Malaysia Country Head Stephen Clark said, “The outpouring of support across all sectors in Malaysia during these challenging times shows the level of community spirit inherent to Malaysians. Taking into account the socio-economic challenges in the months ahead, we wanted to contribute to relieving the burden of low-income families who have lost their means of income, and daily-wage workers who cannot go to work.”



“We are privileged to be able to work with Z Zurich Foundation to support vulnerable people within our local communities with resources to better protect themselves and to adapt to the challenging and rapidly changing world,” he added.

President of Epic Society, John-Son Oei shares the same sentiment, “While the Movement Control Order (MCO) is necessary to ensure the safety of the nation, vulnerable groups like the Orang Asli have been impacted more drastically than the average Malaysian. To maximise the impact of Z Zurich Foundation grant, we are embarking on a mapping exercise with non-government organisations (NGOs) on the ground to gain valuable insights, which will help us in developing effective relief and recovery efforts in line with our long-term goals of building community resilience to enable social mobility. Epic looks forward to working together with Zurich Malaysia in the empowerment of the Orang Asli community.”

The Z Zurich Foundation is a charitable foundation, funded by various members of the Zurich Insurance Group to deliver on community investment by working with organisations to amplify impact beyond what could be achieved individually. The Z Zurich Foundation supports solutions that address social issues and have a meaningful, positive outcome in communities. Amidst the global pandemic, the Z Zurich Foundation has provided special COVID-19 relief donations to more than 30 countries, benefitting hundreds of charities and already impacted hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people in the areas of education, basic provision (food), healthcare, and well-being.

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**Epic Society** is a non-profit body registered by the Malaysian Registrar of Societies (ROS) focusing on providing basic infrastructure and welfare, building capacity, enabling social mobility and shared prosperity for the relief of poverty within vulnerable communities. They inspire, mobilise and empower collaborative civic behaviour through volunteering, technology, education, and community development. Epic has also proudly been involved in development projects around the region, while also establishing themselves as consultants to organisations from multiple sectors, including the Malaysian government and most recently the Obama Foundation. Find out more about their latest initiative, the COVID-19 Collective for Orang Asli, on [www.sedunia.me/oa-collective](http://www.sedunia.me/oa-collective)

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