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NO
POVERTY

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GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

UCSI University demonstrates its commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 1 (No Poverty) by promoting equitable access to higher education for students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds. Guided by its institutional philosophy of being a “*Socially Responsible Campus*,” the university prioritises widening participation among students from low-income households, particularly those within Malaysia’s Bottom 40% (B40) income group.

At the institutional level, UCSI University provides financial assistance and scholarship schemes through mechanisms such as the UCSI University Trust, which administers scholarships and funding opportunities aimed at reducing financial barriers to higher education. In the 2025 reporting year, a total of RM1,666,316 in tuition fee waivers and financial assistance was disbursed to support students in need. These initiatives enable capable students from lower-income families to access and successfully complete their studies.

Beyond financial aid, UCSI University maintains a comprehensive student support ecosystem designed to assist students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds throughout their academic journey. These support mechanisms include student welfare assistance, tuition fee assistance and access to essential learning resources. These initiatives help students manage financial challenges while allowing them to remain focused on their studies.

The university also implements student success initiatives and academic support systems that assist financially disadvantaged students in progressing through their programmes and completing their degrees. These initiatives reflect the university’s broader commitment to improving social mobility and reducing educational inequality.

UCSI University also hosts a diverse international student community representing more than 120 nationalities. While scholarships are available to international students, these are generally awarded based on academic merit rather than financial need.

Through these combined efforts, UCSI University continues to strengthen its role as an institution that supports inclusive education and socio-economic mobility, ensuring that students from disadvantaged backgrounds have the opportunity to access and complete quality higher education.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. COMMUNITY PROGRAMME YOUTH-FRIENDLY RECYCLING CORNER: BRIGHT MINDS, GREEN ACTIONS AND BACK-TO-SCHOOL SUPPORT AT SK SEMATAN

The Youth-Friendly Recycling Corner: Bright Minds, Green Actions and Back-to-School Support programme was organised by UCSI University Sarawak Campus at Sekolah Kebangsaan Sematan, Sarawak, involving university representatives, teachers and approximately 100 primary school students. Led by Adlin Baizura Ariffin from the Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management, the initiative addressed financial hardship among underprivileged students whose limited household income restricts access to essential school supplies, aligning with SDG 1.

The programme combined sustainability education with community support. Activities included recycling awareness sessions, creative upcycling projects such as painting used tyres to establish a school recycling corner and the distribution of 150 school backpacks donated by an industry partner to support students from low-income families.

The initiative reduced financial pressure on families while promoting environmental awareness and experiential learning, also contributing to SDG 4 and SDG 12.



2. FROM POCKET MONEY TO PORTFOLIO

“From Pocket Money to Portfolio” was a university-organised financial literacy session held on 25 October 2025 at UCSI University and was attended by 110 participants. The programme addressed youth financial illiteracy, which contributes to economic vulnerability and aimed to equip students with practical knowledge and skills for informed financial decision-making, supporting SDG 1.

Participants gained insights into budgeting, investment strategies and wealth management through guidance from the UCSI Youth Financial Literacy Club and Wong Kok Hong, Head of Wealth Investment Advisor at Affin Bank Berhad. The session increased financial awareness, motivated responsible money management and provided actionable tools to build long-term economic resilience. At a broader level, the initiative advances SDG 4 by enhancing financial literacy and lifelong learning, SDG 8 by fostering employability and entrepreneurial skills and SDG 10 by promoting equal access to financial knowledge, contributing to youth empowerment and poverty reduction. SDG 17 was also demonstrated through the partnership with Affin Bank Berhad.



3. UCSI UNIVERSITY FOSTERS COMPASSION THROUGH GOLDEN BONDS OUTREACH AT RUMAH SERI KENANGAN

The Golden Bonds Visiting Programme was organised by the Student Affairs and Alumni Department of UCSI University Sarawak Campus in collaboration with RCE Kuching on 25 October 2025 at Rumah Seri Kenangan, Kuching. The initiative addressed economic vulnerability among elderly residents, supporting SDG 1 by providing essential food items and daily necessities.

Approximately 30 residents benefited from the outreach, while students gained valuable experience engaging with them, fostering social responsibility and intergenerational connection. The programme also supported SDG 3 by promoting physical and mental well-being, SDG 4 by providing experiential learning in civic engagement and community service and SDG 10 by assisting marginalised elderly communities.

At a broader level, this initiative strengthened social safety nets, encouraged inclusive support systems and enhanced community solidarity. By combining direct assistance with student-led engagement, the programme contributed to poverty alleviation, improved quality of life for elderly residents and nurtured socially responsible leadership, aligning with national and global sustainability efforts.



RESEARCH AND DISCOVERY

1. ANALYSING THE IMPACT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS ON ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION: EMPIRICAL INSIGHTS FROM EMERGING ECONOMY

(Sustainable Futures, Volume 10 (2025). Assoc Prof Dr Lim Ai Fen)

To support the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, this study examines the impact of population growth, poverty and energy consumption on environmental degradation through the lens of Malthusian theory, within the context of Pakistan. The research employs unit root tests, co-integration analysis and the Auto-Regressive Distributed Lag model to analyse time series data spanning from 1972 to 2023.

The findings indicate that population growth, poverty and excessive energy consumption significantly accelerate environmental degradation, as proxied by CO₂ emissions, in both the short and long run. Based on these results, the study recommends that policymakers implement strategies to manage population growth, alleviate poverty and curb unsustainable energy consumption in order to mitigate environmental degradation and ecological collapse, while contributing to the achievement of the SDGs.

This study offers a novel contribution by examining the combined effects of population growth, poverty rates and energy consumption patterns on environmental degradation, proxied by CO₂ emissions, from a Malthusian perspective within the Pakistani context. Furthermore, it contributes to SDG-related discourse by addressing key issues in poverty alleviation, sustainable energy use and environmental protection.

2. DIGITAL TRANSACTIONS AND FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT: THE MODERATING ROLE OF GLOBAL INTEGRATION ACROSS INCOME LEVELS

(*International Review of Economics and Finance*, (2025). Assoc Prof Dr Liew Chee Yoong)

This study examines the interaction between digital financial transactions (DFT) and financial development (FD) across 121 countries over the period 2003–2022, focusing upon the moderating role of global financial integration (GFI). Using two-step system generalised method of moments (GMM), Bootstrap Quantile-on-Quantile Regression, Nonlinear multilevel Mixed-Effects and D-K Fixed Effects models, this study explores the variations in this relationship across high-, upper-middle-, and low-income countries. The findings indicate that DFT and economic development positively influence FD, while bank risk demonstrates a negative influence. Governance quality positively influences FD, and while GFI also positively influences FD, it weakens the positive impact of DFT on FD globally. Interestingly, GFI strengthens the DFT-FD relationship in middle- and low-income economies, suggesting region-specific dynamics and the potential of GFI to counter structural barriers in these economies. This distinct interaction emphasises the need for customised policies that promote both digital financial inclusion and global financial integration that are aligned with country-specific economic contexts. Our study provides actionable insights for policymakers to foster sustainable financial development through customised digital and financial integration strategies.

COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIP (COMMUNITY OUTREACH)

1. UCSI CARE – CHRISTMAS GIFT OF LOVE AND CARE

The UCSI Care: Christmas Gift of Love and Care initiative marked its sixth year, reaffirming UCSI University's commitment to social responsibility and inclusive community engagement. The programme supported vulnerable children and senior citizens in five welfare homes - Bodhi Home Care, Persatuan Kebajikan Wen Hua, Hope Learning Center, Ruth Education Center and Pusat Jagaan Anbe Sivam - through the collection and distribution of Christmas gifts and essential items, with Bodhi Home Care receiving continuous support for six years. Staff, including UCSI Asst Prof Lucas Lim, alongside students and volunteers, actively participated, strengthening university-led community involvement. Aligned with SDG 1: No Poverty, the initiative provided material support while fostering empathy and long-term partnership. It also supports SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being, SDG 4: Quality Education by promoting well-being, assisting marginalised groups and offering students experiential learning in volunteerism and SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities. The programme enhanced social cohesion, delivered joy to beneficiaries and contributed to inclusive, equitable and sustainable community development.



2. COURTESY VISIT BY UCSI UNIVERSITY TO MAIPK

On 12 August 2025, UCSI University conducted a strategic courtesy visit to Majlis Agama Islam dan 'Adat Melayu Perak to explore potential collaboration opportunities for expanding higher education access among asnaf students—individuals eligible for zakat support, typically from low-income and underprivileged communities. The engagement addressed persistent poverty and limited socioeconomic mobility caused by restricted access to quality education and professional training opportunities.

Discussions focused on enrolment pathways into healthcare, medical and technical programmes, alongside structured support to enhance affordability and academic readiness. Key outcomes included alignment on partnership frameworks, potential sponsorship channels and strategies to facilitate access for eligible students. This initiative also supports SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth by promoting equitable education, employability and long-term economic resilience among marginalised communities, contributing to national efforts in poverty reduction and sustainable socioeconomic development and SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities.

