Executive Director of UN-Habitat calls for the Empowerment of Women to Empower Communities in Hasanah Forum Keynote


“I deliberately focused on women and gender equality because we cannot achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) without supporting women and families. It is, to me, the bedrock of “justice-based philanthropy”. By empowering women, we are also “empowering communities,” said Maimunah. “When all local actors work together to give voice to the marginalised, vulnerable, and hidden parts of society, you will be able to do so when you prioritise women, girls, youths and families,” she added.

"Women are the backbone of our communities, they are the ones who are often the first to be affected by poverty, climate change, and other challenges. But they are also the ones who are most resilient and have the most to offer when it comes to finding solutions.”

She also said that the evidence shows that when women are empowered, it has a positive impact on the entire community, leading to better health, education, and economic opportunities for everyone.

THF x AVPN 2023 is a premier social impact event happening 20-22 June co-hosted by Yayasan Hasanah (Hasanah), the Foundation of Khazanah Nasional along with AVPN; bringing together 1,200 international delegates visiting Kuala Lumpur over three days with another 1,000 virtual attendees on livestream via thf.yayasanhasanah.org.

Under the theme of **Fostering Justice-Based Philanthropy: Shifting the Narrative to Action**, the goal of The Hasanah Forum is to facilitate action-oriented conversations and cultivate thought leadership within the evolving landscape of philanthropy leading to tangible socio-economic impact to society.
“Through the Women-Led Cities window of our flagship SDG Cities programme, we aim to work with 1,000 Cities to improve lives of 1 billion people. We are doing this by bringing women leaders and women-led businesses together, to foster the development and growth of women businesses,” Maimunah also said about her UN-Habitat priorities.

Maimunah also called for the use of Islamic finance to help close the infrastructure gap in developing countries. "Islamic finance is a powerful tool that can be used to finance sustainable development," she said. "It is based on the principles of risk-sharing and social responsibility, which are perfectly aligned with the SDGs."

She concluded by calling on all leaders to work together to empower women and girls, and to build more inclusive and sustainable cities. "We need to flip the script on urbanisation," she said. "We need to build cities that work for everyone, not just the wealthy and powerful."

THF x AVPN focuses on putting Asian voices at the forefront of global discourse. Recognising the interconnectedness of socio-economic challenges such as poverty, climate change, and conflict, which perpetuate inequality, THF x AVPN acknowledges that these issues cannot be resolved by governments alone. Active engagement from civil society, businesses shouldering their responsibilities, and empowered individuals are vital to addressing these challenges.

Since the foundation’s inception in 2015, Hasanah has impacted 2.4 million people and catalysed over 470 partners across more than 600 on-ground programmes throughout Malaysia. The THF 2023 session livestream recordings are accessible online for free by visiting thf.yayasanhasanah.org.

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About Yayasan Hasanah

Yayasan Hasanah (Hasanah) is the impact-based foundation of Khazanah Nasional Berhad (Khazanah), the sovereign wealth fund of Malaysia. Hasanah was set up as an independent entity on 1 July 2015, building on nine years of Corporate Responsibility efforts previously driven by Khazanah. As a grant-giving organisation, Hasanah goes beyond ringgit and sen to facilitate an ecosystem of transformation, working in collaboration with multiple stakeholders, infusing a spirit of advocacy and building capacity in five key focus areas: Education; Community Development; Environment; Arts and Public Spaces; and Knowledge. Collectively and collaboratively, Hasanah hopes to shift the needle of social and community reform for Malaysians, towards advancing Malaysia. For further information, visit www.yayasanhasanah.org.

MEDIA ENQUIRY

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