

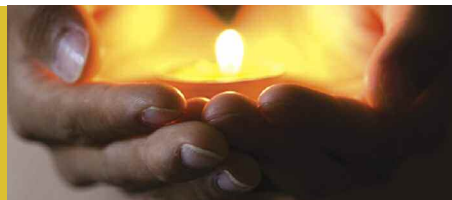
TRANSFORMING LIVES

Another important programme **Feed the Minds** runs in Malaysia is our Overseas Book Service (OBS) which is addressing significant economic and social issues.

OBS strengthens the ability of lay and ordained church leaders to bring about positive change, by providing high quality relevant theological texts free of charge; books which allow church workers to speak with authority on the issues affecting their communities.

Recent titles requested by our Malaysian OBS partners have covered issues including; spirituality, interfaith dialogue, human rights and understanding and preventing honour killings. Books which inform the sermons and pastoral care delivered across this amazing country of contrasts.

Kong Lee Ang from The Fellowship of Evangelical Students (one of the colleges we support) was kind enough to share this prayer with us to help us reflect on the issues faced by the people of Malaysia and encourage our prayerful action.



Guide us to Greatness

*Almighty God, bless Malaysia
and make it true to the ideas of freedom and justice
unite us together, under your reign to make
our country great.*

*Rid us of corruption and hate
And support us in times of fear and confusion.
Focus your love and guidance on our youth
for their skills and passion are the future.*

*Be close to our government;
give them guidance and wisdom where they may stray,
nurture them as they ponder decisions affecting peace
and unite them as they lead the country.*

*Give strength to the church and its leaders
help us improve interfaith relations, for the greater good.
Use our faith and commitment and support of others
to deliver our duties and responsibilities with integrity
to our neighbours.*

*Help us to make our country great,
And bless us all with Your spirit .
Help us support the most in need
And cherish the riches you have bestowed upon us
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord Amen*



Thank you

Together, through education, we have transformed peoples lives for the better, not just providing a short term 'fix' but empowering individuals and communities to take control of their lives; making a long term difference.

Thank you, not just from everyone at **Feed the Minds**, but most importantly from all our partners. We share the support we have with all of them, and we know, through prayer, we can all connect no matter how far apart we may be.



FEED THE MINDS:

Park Place, 12 Lawn Lane, London, SW8 1UD, UK

Tel: 08451 21 21 02 International: +44 (0) 20 7582 3535

Email: info@feedtheminds.org Website: www.feedtheminds.org

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World Day of Prayer 2012 Let Justice Prevail

Education makes
a world of difference



Speak up and judge
fairly; defend the rights
of the poor and needy.
Proverbs 31:9

About Feed the Minds

Feed the Minds is an ecumenical Christian international development charity that has been using education to transform lives for 48 years. Our work is an expression of the concern for justice, peace and wholeness that springs naturally from our Christian beliefs.

We believe that **education makes a world of difference** – that giving individuals and communities the right knowledge and skills allows them to take charge of their own lives and meet their own needs.

All our projects are run in partnership with local churches and community groups. They improve literacy and numeracy levels and can be divided into the following key areas: Practical Theological Education, Health Education, Civic Education, Peacebuilding and Vocational Training.



MALAYSIA IN CONTEXT

Malaysia has developed economically thanks to a wealth of natural resources, high-tech industries, commerce and tourism, and as such, the Malaysian government has been able to invest in education. This means literacy rates are far higher than most of the countries that **Feed the Minds** works in, at around 93%.

A high literacy rate is hugely positive as we know that education has the potential to transform lives in many ways; be it improving earnings, healthcare, spiritual wellbeing or encouraging understanding and co-operation. However, the Malaysian people still face a great many challenges with many sections of their community marginalised due to gender, disability, social class and race. In addition, securing religious freedom and interfaith harmony is a significant ongoing issue in the country.

Persons with disabilities in Malaysia are frequently stigmatised and left unsupported when they leave school. The government has passed legislation but legal change has not yet made a practical difference. Available support for persons with disabilities remains limited, there is no clear government strategy to implement support services and unemployment rates are persistently high.

OUR WORK IN ACTION

We are working with local partner organisation Joy Workshop to accelerate change for persons with disabilities, specifically young people with learning disabilities in the Melaka district, West Malaysia.

A recent study revealed teachers feel there is insufficient training and support for persons with disabilities, preventing the successful transition from school to employment. 95% of parents with disabled children also showed a strong desire to see their children enter the world of work and supported the teachers' views. So using the internationally accepted 'supported employment' method we are assessing the skills and needs of young men and women with learning disabilities and are helping them to; access training, get work experience and enter suitable full time employment.

Job coaches are key to the supported employment process and the successful long term integration of persons with disabilities into the world of work. **Feed the Minds** is using its expertise to improve their focus on literacy, so barriers that exist for persons with disabilities with low literacy skills are assessed and overcome.

The placement of Lye Siew Ying into a local hairdresser's shop is just one recent success. Without intervention Siew Ying would have had little opportunity to meet other people and may have been confined to her home. But, whilst she used to have trouble with her speech and self-confidence, her job as an assistant has transformed her into a cheerful young woman, who earns a wage and has started making her own decisions. Far and away the best part of the job for Siew Ying is being able to get a new hair style every few months, and she has just dyed it Burgundy!

Siew Ying's job has changed her dramatically, and it has also changed the views of the staff at the hair salon. They were initially apprehensive about employing someone with a learning disability but now they have seen how independent Siew Ying can be, and have said how she brightens up their day with her smiles and greetings.

Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the
oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless;
plead the case of the widow. Isaiah 1:17