

Profile

ERA Consumer Malaysia is a voluntary, non-profit and non-political organization registered under the Societies Act of Malaysia 1966. It was founded in the state of Perak in 1985 as a research, education and consumer and human rights advocacy group and subsequently expanded into a national organisation, now based in Kuala Lumpur.

ERA Consumer's early success was getting the national Consumer Protection Act passed. However our evolving work in this area, and our increasing capabilities to train and conduct community trainings, naturally led ERA Consumer to an expanded portfolio of programs. This includes sustained human rights education programs.

ERA Consumer is the only organisation in the country to have translated various United Nations (UN) instruments on human rights into the national language, Bahasa Malaysia or the Malay language. These documents have been disseminated to all the public libraries in the country, the libraries of colleges and universities, foreign diplomatic missions, to a number of foreign NGOs and to the resource centres of local political parties so that they have access to these documents in the language that is most widely used in Malaysia.

In 1999, together with the Canadian Human Rights Foundation, ERA Consumer organised a workshop on a training program for NGOs in supporting the investigative functions of the SUHAKAM. The following year, soon after Parliament passed an Act to establish SUHAKAM, we organised a workshop involving NGOs on Understanding the HRC Act. Subsequently, ERA has held National Consultations annually to assess the performance of SUHAKAM.

For the year 2003, ERA has continued with its efforts to educate the public on human rights. Continuous human rights training programs targeting women and youth have been conducted all over the country. To date ERA have trained 8,000 members of the public on human rights since 1998. Many of whom are members of political parties that we are certain will share the information that been provided to them with the other members of their party. Besides that ERA has also organised further training for participants paying emphasis on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Training programs are ongoing projects for ERA and it is conducted throughout the year.

Besides education and awareness programs, ERA is also involved in grass root level community projects. We at ERA recognise the need to empower community members of the ethnic minority. We have been selected by the European Union to carry out the setting up of community centres to empower and educate the Indian community in the rural areas. In the course of this project, we have built linkages with community leaders, the grass root community members as well as lesser-known NGOs.

ERA Consumer is also a member of the Working Group for the ASIAN Human Rights Mechanism. This Working Group is an informal coalition of individuals and groups within the ASIAN region who are working with government institutions and NGOs in the field of human rights. The Working Group's primary objective is the establishment of an inter-governmental human rights mechanism in Southeast Asia.

On an International level, ERA Consumer is a member of Forum Asia. ERA also works with the Canadian Human Rights Foundation and AsiaDHRRA (Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas, a coalition of South and East Asian NGOs working in the area of farmer's rights), Consumer International, South East Asian Council for Food Security and Fair Trade, on food security and trade issues at a regional level.

In the area of standards, ERA Consumer acts as the consumer watchdog on the government panel working on the adoption of standards set by the International Standards Organisation. On Consumer

protection issues, ERA Consumer collaborates with the Federation of Malaysian Consumer Association (FOMCA), the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs and the Regional Office of the United Nations Development Program on environmental issues.

ERA Consumer Malaysia - Human Rights Desk

Human Rights Desk of ERA Consumer Malaysia focuses on following values;

- participation
- empowerment of youth, community leaders, political leaders and indigenous people
- respect for human rights
- diversity and mutual respect

Mission
To promote and raise human rights awareness towards building empowered communities who are able to assert confidently and participate effectively in issues related to their daily lives.

Vision
A society that demands for accountable governance and social justice