



Prof. Emerita Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Sharifah Hapsah

- President of the National Council of Women's Organisations (NCWO)
- Member of the Public-Private sector initiative to ease business (PEMUDAH)
- Member of the Advisory Panel for the SDG Investor Map
- Member of the Board of SDG Foundation
- Chancellor, KPJ Healthcare University

After her retirement Sharifah devoted her time to voluntary civil society work as President of NCWO. In 2022 she was called to continue serving the nation as a member of Member of the Board of SDG Foundation, member of the Public-Private sector initiative to ease business (PEMUDAH) and Member of the Advisory Panel for the SDG Investor Map. In her last capacity she convinced the advisory panel to include the care industry as an investment opportunity. Recently she was appointed Chancellor of KPJ Healthcare University.

Her career started after graduating as a medical doctor in 1973. She served as house doctor at University Hospital UM and medical officer at Hospital Kuala Lumpur. In 1975 she joined UKM as a lecturer in Physiology and rose to become head of Physiology and later as founder head and professor of the Medical Education Department. Among the innovative programmes that were introduced were problem-based learning in the undergraduate curriculum and distance learning in Family Medicine.

In 1996 she was appointed as Director of International Relations and later as Director of Strategic Planning and Development at the main campus in Bangi where she played a more central role for university development, including quality assurance.

Special Education Needs (SEN) Symposium 2023

-2-

In 2000 she was appointed as Director of the Division of Quality Assurance, Ministry of Education, tasked with developing the quality assurance system for public universities. While simultaneously serving on the National Accreditation Board (LAN) she initiated the accreditation of educational programmes in Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry and Pharmacy. In January 2006 she was appointed the CEO of LAN and completed the formulation of the Malaysian Qualifications Agency Bill, which became the MQA Act in June 2007.

In August 2006 she was appointed as the first woman Vice Chancellor of the National University of Malaysia (UKM) and served until December 2014. During her tenure she brought the university to be at par with leading research universities of the same age (40-50 years), while preserving its role in promoting Bahasa Melayu as an academic language. Under her leadership UKM was accorded Self-accrediting status, granted autonomy and was selected as a Research University. During her tenure UKM was ranked number 23 for world universities below 50 years and 8th in Asia. UKM was consistently in the top 300 of world university rankings.

She changed UKM from a university that had only 180 citations to one that accumulated 16,000 citations within 7 years. Through her leadership and an innovative transformation programme for UKM, she managed to break the academic silos and got faculty to work together in multidisciplinary research groups, focusing on 11 niche areas which supported the National Transformation Programme. Research productivity increased with more than 800 patents filed and technology transfer for commercialization through 33 start-up companies which generated revenue and created jobs. The basic curriculum was revamped with clear learning outcomes and a compulsory requirement for entrepreneurship where students were assisted to launch companies. During her tenure more than 100 student companies were incubated and launched at graduation.

Her NCWO background heightened her sensitivity to university-community engagement where students and staff were encouraged to transfer knowledge for societal development. Community engagement was most active at the five regional sites where UKM has a campus (living labs), namely the Langkawi Geopark Research Station, Teluk Intan Community Health Campus, Mersing Marine Research Station, Tasik Chini and Wetlands Research Station and Fraser's Hill Montane Research Station. In addition, UKM adopted two villages in Kundang Hulu, Pagoh and Pulau Manis, Pekan. As Vice Chancellor, she was tasked by YB Dato Mustapa Mohamed, Minister of Higher Education then to draft the National Higher Education Strategic Plan (NHESP), which served as the blueprint for Higher Education in Malaysia. In 2011 she was appointed by MOHE to chair the Critical Agenda Project on governance for autonomy. Within a year she produced the Code of University Good Governance (CUGG) and procedures for evaluating the preparedness of IPTAs for autonomy or University Good Governance Index (UGGI). Both documents are used for auditing universities before conferring the status of autonomy. She also served as Chairperson of the Vice Chancellors' Committee.