

# SUSTAINABILITY BRIEF

## BRIDGING THE GAP DOCUMENTATION SUPPORT FOR MIGRANTS IN THE SABAH PALM SECTOR

Wilmar has been working closely with both the Indonesian consulate and the Philippines embassy since 2022 on ensuring outreach and consular support for documentation of Indonesian and Filipino migrants in the regions where we operate in Sabah.

Our most recent initiative was with the Philippines embassy from Kuala Lumpur, who set up a temporary consulate outpost at Wilmar's operations in Sapi Plantation near Sandakan. Filipino migrants including children facing challenges with their travel documentation were encouraged to voluntarily come forth to seek assistance. The program was also supported by 11 other companies in the palm sector.



*A Filipino national having his photo taken for documentation processing*



*Filipino migrants awaiting their turn at the temporary consulate outpost set up by the Philippines embassy in Kuala Lumpur at Wilmar's Sapi Plantation*

## Labour Shortage in the Malaysian Palm Oil Sector

To date, in Wilmar we have enabled consular documentation support for over 3,300 of our workers in Sabah, while channelling over RM1.5 million in resources for this programme, including support for the children and dependents of our workers.

Migrant workers in East Malaysia, particularly Sabah, are often linked to long, complex legacy issues of cross border movement from Indonesia and Philippines<sup>1</sup>. Many can face dire circumstances linked to poor living conditions and potential exploitation by unscrupulous businesses. These circumstances were further amplified during the Covid-19 pandemic when national cross border movement controls were being enforced.



*Iris scans to enable more accurate registration of individuals were provided by the temporary consulate outpost*

<sup>1</sup> [Fair Labour Association: Independent External Monitoring Agricultural Report 2019](#)

The objective of our collaboration with the various embassies and consulates, is to ensure that our workers and their dependents are taken care of and their human rights protected.

These efforts are aligned with the Malaysian government whose own Labour Recalibration Program which was focussed in Peninsular Malaysia, successfully processed over 410,000 migrants as of end 2022<sup>2</sup>.



*Wilmar Plantations top management and organizing team together with the Philippines Embassy team in Sapi Plantations*

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<sup>2</sup> [Free Malaysia Today: Labour Shortage Cost Palm Oil Sector RM20bil Last Year, Says Fadillah](#)