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COMMUNICATIONS



(from left)
Tan and Ho
helping to
create a more
conductive
living
environment
for 12 residents
of Taman Prima
Selayang like
Che Aminah
and her
grandchildren
(below) whose
home was
repainted by
Nippon staff
(bottom).

Adding colour to lives

> Nippon Paint is helping non-profit organisation PKGG create brighter homes for needy residents of Taman Prima Selayang

THE FOUR ageing blocks of 800 low-cost flats in Taman Prima Selayang in Selayang, Selangor, is home to several hardcore poor or marginalised families.

The Persatuan Kebajikan Generasi Gemilang (PKGG), a non-profit welfare organisation, has been working closely with these residents for the last five years, conducting programmes to benefit them, especially the children.

Some of the programmes include teaching valuable life skills, such as social values and financial management, to help the adults improve themselves, and running mentoring and educational programmes for children who need extra coaching in their schoolwork.

Recently, in a move to provide a more conducive home environment for the residents, PKGG embarked on a project with Nippon Paint called Colours of Life.

Under the project, 12 selected flats in Taman Prima Selayang will be repainted. The households concerned, some with young children, all have monthly incomes below RM4,000.

This is the first phase of what is planned as a long-term project with the residents of Taman Prima Selayang.

PKGG executive director Daniel Tan said: "We wanted to have a programme based on home improvement. Most of the households we work with here don't have a conducive home environment. There is minimal furniture and very few decorations.

"For children living there, there's a lack of stimulation and creativity, and many of them say that they don't like coming home, preferring to remain outside which does nothing to improve relations among family members.

"So for our part, we want to make their home a little nicer to live in. We clean up the house, help fix up some of the furniture and do everything except paint - this is where Nippon Paint comes in.

"It might sound like a simple act, but improving the look of the home makes the residents happier to be at home, and help them feel positive."

Nippon Paint human resources and corporate affairs assistant general manager Jason Ho added: "At Nippon, we've a lot of experience with colours and how they can be used to improve moods, so we are happy to share our knowledge through this project.

"At the same time, we wanted to be involved in something long term, not just a one-off corporate social responsibility (CSR) event, and we are excited to work with PKGG to help brighten up the lives of these families here.

"The concept of family is very important to Nippon, because we treat our employees as part of our corporate family."

The project is slated to run for six months beginning this month, with two units being repainted each month.



One of the freshly repainted units belongs to a single mother, who declined to be identified, with four children under the ages of five. Her 56-year-old mother, who only wanted to be known as Che Aminah, babysits the children while she is away working in a factory.

All the members of the family helped to choose the new colours for their home. The painting itself was done by staff of Nippon Paint.

An in-house interior decorator also worked with the family in the redecorating process, although changes were kept to a minimal.

"Since it's their home, we wanted them to have as much say as possible," Tan said. "All their existing furniture was kept except for a new TV table because their old one fell apart when we moved it to paint the walls."

The interior decorator also contributed a floor lamp as well as some cushions for the couch, but the biggest change was the new colour of the living room wall, now a cheery, bright pink.

Che Aminah said her family was happy to be involved in the project. "I really like it very much. I don't know how to describe how happy I am, but my family really enjoys spending time in this beautiful living hall together."

According to Ho, the Colours of Life project will hopefully be the first step to a continuing involvement with the residents of Taman Prima Selayang.

"We'll keep in close contact with PKGG to follow the development of the families in this project, and see what else we can do for future programmes," he added.

Details about PKGG and its programmes and activities can be found on www.gengemilang.org.