



الجامعة الإسلامية العالمية ماليزيا  
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA  
يُونَيْتِي إِسْلَامًا، إِنْتَارَا بَعْثًا مَلِيْسِيَا

# THE WELL-BEING OF STRAY CATS IN IIUM

**Course:** Sustainable Development: Issues, Policies and Practices

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## **1. Background of the project**

International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) seek to achieve the mission which is to become a leading international centre of educational excellence which seeks to restore the dynamic and progressive of the Muslim Ummah in all branches of knowledge and intellectual discourse. In order to attain the objective, IIUM not just focuses on the academic but also making sure that students can learn in a harmonious and comfortable environment. Recently, the number of stray cats coming to mahallah keeps growing and some of them are still a kitten and there is also a pregnant one. It can be predicted that the population of stray cats in IIUM will just keep increasing in the future.

The overpopulation of stray cats had become a problem mostly to students as the cats always entered their room and disturbing their time to study or doing other personal activities. Some of them come to beg for food and some of them are seeking shelter to take refuge. People are actually bothered by the cats because of the loud noise they make when they are fighting each other. The Abu Hurairah club is an active club in IIUM which the objective is to demonstrate the beauty of Rahmatan lil'Alamin (Mercy to all by showing love to animals, especially cats. The club had managed taking care of some of the stray cats in a shelter that had been provided in mahallah such as Mahallah Aminah. Unfortunately, it still cannot afford to solve this problem as the cost to take care of the stray cats is expensive. Therefore, our group wants to bring awareness to IIUM students so they are aware about the situation and can lend their hand to help solving this problem.

## **2. Objectives of the project**

The objectives of this project are:

- 1) To take care of the stray cats' well-being in our campus.
- 2) To bring awareness to the plight of stray cats in our campus.
- 3) To instil respect, compassion and caring for animals, nature, and the environment on our campus.

## **3. Significance of the project**

The significance of this project is mainly to benefit the stray cats in IIUM by taking care of their well-being and to propose an appropriate solution to management and related parties to make sure that these stray cats' well-being is well maintained.

After doing a survey, we had identified some problems with stray cats on our campus and tried to solve it with an appropriate solution. Many responses that we got from our survey showed that students think that stray cats are a problem on campus because of the overpopulation of the cats which leads to sanitation issues. Besides that, those cats are also not well cared for its welfare and health. Thus, from the results of the survey, we are able to come with a proposed solution which is to neuter the cats to avoid overbreeding. This solution can be proposed to Abu Hurairah Club and the management of IIUM to implement it. Hence, the well-being of the stray cats will be well maintained.

#### 4. Challenges

Every project has their own challenges. In order to solve it, every group member must take an initiative together to get better results. Each member must have their own speciality and ability but others may have less skills in the area that we are expert. Challenges that we have during the project is communication, checking the well being of cats in International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), obtaining the information about the initiative that have been done before and having problem in delaying the progress of the report since we have other assignments from other subjects as well.

We had problems communicating with each other because we do not really know our group members deeply. Low engagement between us happened especially in the early phase of the project. We do not know how to get the contact for each member. Thankfully, we can message in Italeem to get the contact number for each member. Aini is the first who approaches us. As we know effective communication is really important to get a good result. We need to involve all the group members to get a final consensus, so that there will be no miscommunication which could lead to other bad things especially in the result of the project. We manage this challenge by choosing a leader which is Aini. She divided our work fairly and kept on updating some examples that we can follow to complete our task.

We also have problems in checking and seeing the well being of cats in IIUM by ourselves since 3 members from our group stay at home and just 1 member currently stays at university which is Alima. She took an initiative to go to the cat shelter located in Mahallah Aminah and monitor the well-being of cats on the campus. She keeps on updating about the cat's well being in IIUM, so that other members will know the real situation happened in IIUM

Campus. Other members also can know about the well-being of the cat through Abu Hurairah Club's whatsapp group since one of our members, 'Afifah, is also a member of Abu Hurairah Club. She also updates info based on what has been discussed in the group whatsapp such as seeking an adopter in mahallah, taking care of the kittens and so on. Sharing this kind of information makes us understand more about the well being of cats in IIUM.

Next, we also have problems knowing the initiative that has been done before in IIUM. So that, we take initiative to ask most of the mainboard of Abu Hurairah Club. One of the group members, 'Afifah contacted the vice president of the Abu Hurairah Club to spread the google form only for the mainboard which was created by Aini. We also asked the students if they take care of the cats in IIUM or not and obtained more information from them through google form created by Farah such as their awareness towards this issue. Through this method, we are able to know how the cat in IIUM was taken care of before. We also can know about the willingness of the student to take care of the cats if the food cat is being sold in IIUM.

Lastly, we have problems in delaying the work to complete this project since the date of submission clashed with other subjects as well. Moreover, we are from different classes in other subjects. It is quite hard for us to set a time to discuss some issues together since every member has their own commitment to other projects as well. It is understood because final exam is just around the corner and it is a season for the students to submit most of the last assignment. However, we do not abandon this group project, we manage the problem by dividing our part into specific tasks and keep on responding to other group members' questions. We divided the main content that must be included in the video and report. We also appoint the one that will compile the video. Regarding the report, we did it through google docs since everyone can

access and edit it. To conclude, all the challenges can be overcome if all members work together and not burden the other member by not doing the task.

## **5. Recommendations**

After conducting our research, the main objective is to reduce the overpopulation of stray and feral cats. Our recommendation is to create a Trap-Neuter-Return(TNR) project. TNR is a method attempting to humanely and effectively manage free-roaming domestic cats. The project is conducted exactly as the name stated, cats are humanely trapped and taken to a veterinarian to be neutered and vaccinated. After recovery, the cats are returned to their home or territory. TNR prevents the overpopulation of cats. It stops the breeding cycle of cats and helps the quality life of cats. The cost of spaying/neutering is much lower than the cost of feeding and providing veterinary care for the stray cats that need medical help. It is a one-time cost, and the cost is very low when you consider the numerous benefits it provides. Spaying/neutering also has important health benefits. There are many forms of cancer and diseases that can be associated with having an excessive amount of pregnancies in cats. When a female cat has too many pregnancies it promotes mammary, uterine, and other health problems. Spaying cats is a way to keep cats healthier and prevent premature deaths. Cats that are spayed also do not go into heat, which attracts fewer tomcats, resulting in less fighting and injury. Neutered and spayed cats also live longer, and remain in the same colony for a longer period of time. One major complaint about feral cats is their behavior. Many cats will participate in excessive fighting, whether it be territorial, food-related, over a female cat, etc. This can lead to loud noise in the university. Another behavior that is common among feral cats is spraying their urine around university property to mark their territory. Nuisance behavior becomes more rampant when feral cats breed

in sheltered areas close to or in homes it can lead to property destruction. It is a fact that when cats are spayed or neutered, there is a decrease in this kind of behavior, making living among feral cats much more pleasant. According to Islam, spaying/neutered is not recommended but not exactly forbidden. Many scholars had many debates about this matter as this topic isn't mentioned a lot in Alquran and Sunnah. Imam Maliki viewed that it is permissible to neuter animals whose meat may be eaten, and it is not reprehensible, because that makes the meat better while Imam Hanafi viewed that there is nothing wrong with neutering animals, because that benefits both the animals and humans.



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