



FAMILY FRONTIERS

**Family Frontiers**

# IMPACT REPORT

**2023**





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**MESSAGE  
FROM THE  
COMMUNITY**



Hello, I'm Susan Tan, and I want to share my story about this journey of obtaining citizenship for my child. It's a tale of struggle, perseverance, and hope—a journey that many Malaysian mothers like me have experienced.

Seven years ago, I never imagined the uphill battle I would face in securing citizenship for my children born overseas. I vividly recall the discouraging words from an officer at the Malaysian Embassy in Egypt, telling me that no Malaysian mother had ever succeeded in obtaining citizenship for her children. It was disheartening, to say the least. But I refused to give up.

Year after year, I endured the endless cycle of visa renewals and the constant fear of my children being separated from me if anything were to happen. It was a rollercoaster of emotions—frustration, anxiety, and sometimes despair. But amidst the challenges, there was also a glimmer of hope—a determination to fight for what is right.

Finally, after years of perseverance, I became one of the fortunate few to secure citizenship for my children. The feeling was indescribable—a mix of relief, joy, and gratitude. But my heart still aches for the countless mothers who continue to wait in hope.

That's why I'm speaking out. I'm urging the Malaysian government to expedite the process and ensure gender equality in passing down citizenship to our children. After all, they are all "Anak Malaysia" and deserve equal rights.

As we enter the year 2024, my hope burns brighter than ever. I pray for legislative changes that will pave the way for a better future—for my children, for all awaiting mothers, and for generations to come. Together, let's keep praying, keep fighting, and keep believing in a Malaysia where every child is recognized, cherished, and embraced as "Anak Malaysia."

Thank you for listening to my story.

Warm regards,  
Susan Tan



My name is Esther, and my journey underscores a profound injustice within our legal system: the unequal treatment of mothers. Despite being a citizen, I've been disheartened to discover that the law fails to recognize mothers as equal citizens. Merely because I gave birth overseas and my spouse is a foreigner, I find myself unwelcome in my own homeland.

It's a gut-wrenching experience witnessing my male colleagues, who faced no hurdles, joyfully returning home with their foreign spouses and children. However, when I became pregnant, I had to jeopardise my life, my marriage, and forsake my cherished career just to ensure my unborn child's Malaysian citizenship. While I'm grateful to be back home, the sacrifices I've made contrast starkly with the ease afforded to Malaysian fathers with foreign wives.

I've always placed my faith in our government's educational system, believing access to schooling is a fundamental right for every child. Yet, the discrimination my daughter faced, being barred from attending classes for the first two weeks due to her foreign status, shattered that belief. It felt like every obstacle was amplified simply because of my gender.

Though there have been some positive developments in approvals recently, the uncertainty of future decisions looms large. We desperately need substantive change in our country's citizenship laws to rectify this deep-seated inequality. I implore the government to abandon regressive amendments and instead prioritise amendments that grant Malaysian mothers equal rights.

Thanks to the advocacy efforts of organisations like Family Frontiers, I've come to understand the power of speaking out. It was through raising my voice that I secured Malaysian citizenship for my daughter. It's imperative for mothers in similar circumstances to find their voice and advocate for themselves. Real change begins when we refuse to be silenced and demand equality under the law.

Thank you for listening to my story.

Warm regards,  
Esther



# OUR 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

A photograph of a woman and a young child. The woman, on the left, has dark hair pulled back and is wearing a white floral-patterned top. She is smiling warmly at the camera. The child, on the right, has curly brown hair and is wearing a red top with a traditional Chinese-style knot at the collar. The child is also smiling. The background is a solid, vibrant purple.

In 2023, Family Frontiers made progress in advancing gender equal citizenship rights in Malaysia. Through our tireless efforts and advocacy, we were able to achieve the following:

# Cabinet: Constitutional amendment to grant citizenship to children born overseas to Malaysian mums



NATION

Saturday, 18 Feb 2023

11:35 AM MYT

## Related News



NATION 48m ago



Malaysian Government Commits to Amending Article 14(1)(b) & (1)(c)



Participation at the Global Summit for Equal Nationality Rights



**Citizenship Approvals via Article 15(2)  
(Citizenship by Registration)**



**Participation in the 4th Cycle of the Universal  
Periodic Review (UPR)**



**Family Frontiers' Network of Malaysian Mothers for Equal  
Citizenship Wins SUARAM Human Rights Awards 2023**



**A YEAR IN  
REVIEW**

# Capacity Building: Empowering Malaysian Mothers for Self-Advocacy

In 2023, Family Frontiers continued to empower Malaysian mothers and their children to advocate for gender-equal citizenship rights. While acknowledging the growing apprehension and fear among some affected mothers and children regarding their participation in our advocacy, Family Frontiers sought to build a safe space for impacted mothers to share their lived experiences, simultaneously empowering them to self-advocate through workshops, one-on-one coaching sessions or support sessions.

The peer support nature of the group has also empowered more mothers in the network to speak up on the issue, building advocates among the larger group of mothers. Malaysian mothers, who have long been at the forefront of the #PindaPerakara14 Campaign, continued to play a pivotal role in shaping the discourse surrounding citizenship rights.

A few impacted mothers took further action by leading their own advocacy through their personal social media accounts to speak on their lived experiences and provide firsthand accounts on the bureaucratic hurdles they face.



### One-on-One Coaching Sessions

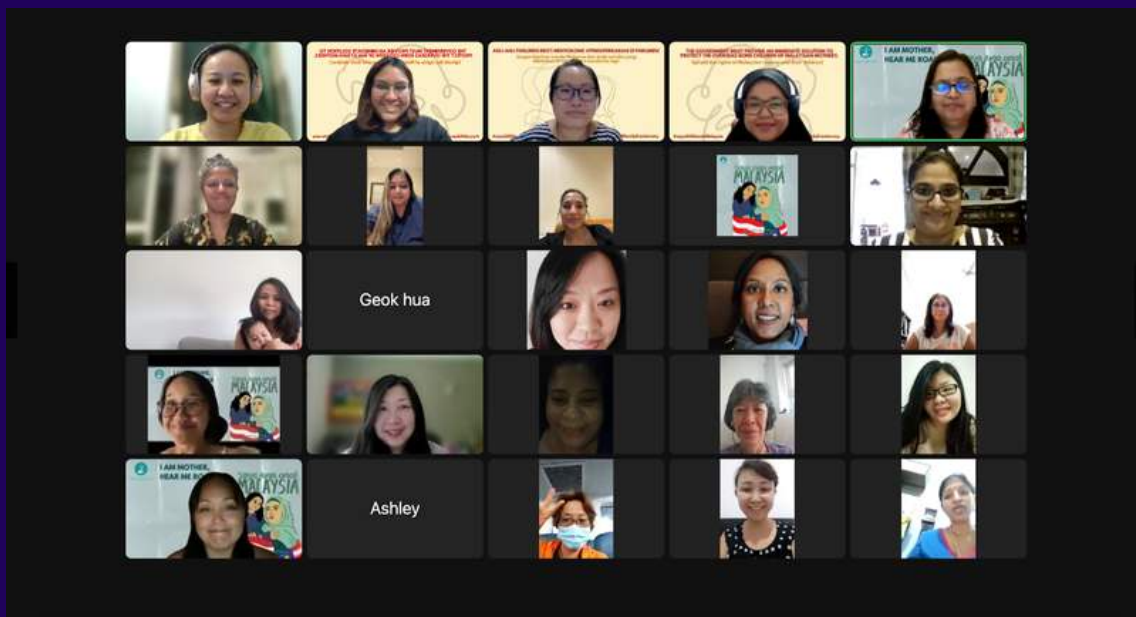
- Family Frontiers conducted one-on-one coaching sessions with Malaysian mothers prior to making interventions on national television, radio, newspapers, and public outreach events. These sessions sharpened their speaking and writing skills, enabling them to confidently share their stories on public platforms. As impacted mothers also actively participated in lobbying efforts, briefings, and engagement sessions with Ministers, Members of Parliament and Government Agencies, these sessions were crucial in ensuring that mothers were well-informed on the complexities of the issues prior to speaking to them. The coaching sessions were conducted continuously throughout the year.

### Quarterly Campaign Update Calls

- Every quarter, Family Frontiers organised quarterly campaign updates via Zoom to keep the community informed on the latest developments in the campaign and how they can continue to take action. The call also serves as a platform to raise any questions or concerns to the Family Frontiers team on the campaign.

### Malaysian Mothers Email & Phone Call Campaign | February 2023

- Following the Cabinet's agreement to realise the reform in February 2023, Family Frontiers mobilised a group of 39 Malaysian mothers who took action by emailing Members of Parliament and calling their service centres, urging MPs to vote in favour of the reform.



### Malaysian Mothers' Teatime Gathering | 2 August 2023

- Family Frontiers organised an in-person gathering with Malaysian mothers, fostering a space for shared experiences and solidarity strengthening. The event aimed to foster solidarity and support, especially to newer mothers who had recently joined the network and mothers who were based overseas and returned home during the summer break.



## Mothers' Circle: A Day of Care and Community for Malaysian Mothers and Children | 26 August 2023

- The Mothers' Circle: A Day of Care and Community for Malaysian Mothers and Children served as a safe space for the community to receive care, connect, and to strengthen one another. The main focus of the event was to provide a support group session for the mothers, guided by mental health professionals, with a focus on the shared problem of dealing with the stress and anxiety that has resulted from the prolonged unequal citizenship law situation. The event was also a space for mothers and children to build relationships with others in the community with hopes of strengthening mothers and children mentally and emotionally, equipping them with coping tools throughout the rest of their advocacy journey and equal citizenship struggles.



# Strategic Litigation: Case of Suriani Kempe & Ors v Government of Malaysia & Ors

On the strategic litigation front, the Suriani Kempe case filed by Family Frontiers and six Malaysian mothers at the Kuala Lumpur High Court to challenge Malaysia's discriminatory citizenship laws, seeking an interpretation of the Federal Constitution to grant Malaysian women equal rights to confer citizenship on their overseas-born children in December 2020, did not make any positive developments in 2023.

While Family Frontiers was granted leave to appeal at the Federal Court on 14 December 2022, the hearing date for the Federal Court was not announced until January 2024.





# Advancing Gender Equal Citizenship Laws Through Parliamentary Mechanisms

Family Frontiers consistently utilises parliamentary mechanisms, including raising questions in Parliament and engaging with the Parliamentary Special Select Committees. In 2023, Family Frontiers engaged with approximately **67** targeted Members of Parliament (MPs) to raise questions on gender discriminatory citizenship laws and immigration policies impacting Malaysian binational families in parliament. From this, **80** questions were posed to the government on the timeline of the reform, data on citizenship applications, statelessness, and prospective reform efforts to existing immigration policies.

In 2023, Family Frontiers was able to engage with the **Parliamentary Special Select Committee on Women and Children** and the **Parliamentary Special Select Committee on Human Rights**. These engagements enabled in-depth discussions on the impacts of gender discriminatory citizenship laws on Malaysian women and children and highlighted the urgency for the reform.



# Impact through Research & Policy Advocacy

Family Frontiers gathers data and information through both desk research and focus group discussions involving impacted persons within our network, with a focus on issues related to citizenship and challenges impacting Malaysian binational families. The data collected is often rooted in real-life experiences and is intended for advocacy purposes when engaging with policymakers.

## Public Perception Survey on #PindaPerkara14

In May 2023, Family Frontiers launched the results of a public opinion survey to gather data on perceptions Malaysians had towards equal citizenship rights for Malaysian women and their children. The survey which was done in collaboration with Vase.ai was conducted from 16 - 19 November 2022, across diverse race and gender and demographic groups, sought to highlight the public sentiment surrounding the issue from various thematic areas, reflecting the need to realise this long-standing reform.

The findings of this survey are now a key part of Family Frontiers' advocacy and serve as an essential resource to inform key decision makers such as Members of Parliament, Government Agencies and Human Rights Institutions.



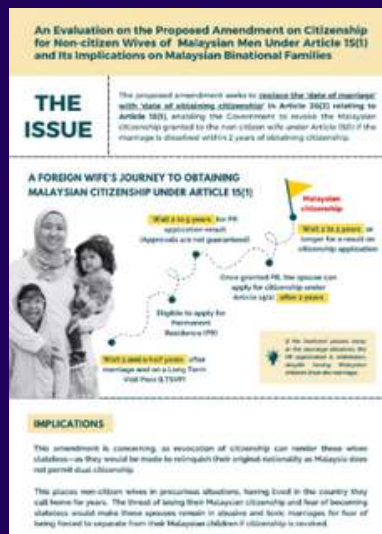
## Curation of Policy briefs to Counter Misconceptions and Mobilise Support Towards Gender-equal Citizenship Reform

Short policy briefs on specific thematic areas were curated in both English and Malay in response to resistance towards the issue and misconceptions raised by policymakers or members of the public as excuses to hinder the progress of the amendment. These briefs were designed to debunk myths and provide clarity on the importance of the reform. Notable thematic areas covered included: to dispel misconceptions and clarify facts surrounding the necessity of the reform. Among them were:

- Binational Family Briefer on Advancing and Protecting the Welfare of Malaysian Binational Families.
- Policy Brief on the Constitutional Amendment
- Explainer on the Proposed Amendment on Citizenship
- Briefer on proposed amendment for Non-citizen Wives of Malaysian Men Under Article 15(1) and Its Implications on Malaysian Binational Families.
- Briefer on Addressing the Concerns of Dual citizenship
- The Lived Experiences of Malaysian Women and their Children Born Outside Malaysia due to Malaysia's Unequal Citizenship Laws.



Addressing Concerns of Dual Citizenship [[Link](#)]



An Evaluation on the Proposed Amendment on Citizenship for Non-citizen Wives of Malaysian Men Under Article 15(1) and Its Implications on Malaysian Binational Families . This briefer was curated following the Government's announcement on the regressive amendments, in particular, the [amendment](#) concerning a foreign spouse of a Malaysian man. [[Link](#)]



Lived Experiences of Malaysian Women and their Children Born Outside Malaysia due to Malaysia's Unequal Citizenship Laws [[Link](#)]

## Focus Group Discussions on Issues Impacting Malaysian Binational Families

Family Frontiers organised 3 focus group discussions with individuals in Malaysian transnational marriages impacted by discriminatory immigration policies and practices. These discussions addressed thematic areas where transnational couples encounter challenges, including economic marginalisation and limited access to permanent residence. The sessions also served as spaces for solidarity strengthening among participants, empowering them to advocate more actively for their rights. The findings from these discussions were converted into actionable data and included in our advocacy materials.



## Policy brief on Protecting the Welfare of Malaysian Binational Families

Based on the data collected from our focus group discussions and existing research, Family Frontiers crafted a policy brief addressing critical issues affecting Malaysian binational families [[Link](#)]. This brief highlights key concerns, including challenges with the Long-Term Social Visit Pass (LTVSP) or Spouse Visa application process, limited employment rights for non-citizen spouses, and restricted access to permanent residence. Additionally, it delves into the limited legal status for separated, divorced, and widowed non-citizen spouses, along with their restricted access to economic, social, and cultural rights. The brief was shared with Ministers and representatives from government agencies, featuring stark stories of women in Malaysian binational marriages disproportionately impacted by economic marginalisation and limited legal security to reside in the country. Within these thematic areas, the brief also provides recommendations to ensure Malaysia aligns with global standards by establishing fair and equitable immigration policies for non-citizen spouses in transnational marriages.

# Stakeholder Engagement — Members of Parliament, Ministries, Political Parties & Policymakers

In 2023, the focus of the campaign shifted following the formation of the new Government in November 2022. It was crucial to re-establish relationships with the newly formed Cabinet and new Members of Parliament to inform them on the issue and push for the reform. Family Frontiers began engaging with key decision makers, including Members of Parliament from the opposition bloc and Senators seeing that the amendment would require a two-third majority from Members of Parliament and Senators.

During these engagements, impacted Malaysian mothers were at the forefront, sharing their lived experiences and bringing along stories of other Malaysian mothers in similar circumstances. They continuously urged for the tabling of the amendment to grant Malaysian women equal citizenship rights, akin to Malaysian men, to take place without further delay as the reform would bring immediate relief to many women and their families.



**Briefing with YB Dr Siti Mastura, Member of Parliament (PAS), 20 March 2023**

Family Frontiers spoke to YB Dr Siti Mastura, a Member of Parliament from PAS (a conservative Islamic Party) as part of efforts to engage with the opposition bloc on matters concerning unequal citizenship laws. Adlyn Teoh and Ummal Remiza who are Malaysian mothers impacted by gender unequal citizenship laws shared their own lived experience as an impacted mothers.



**Briefing with Perikatan Nasional, 3 April 2024**

On 3 April 2023, Family Frontiers organised its first briefing with 11 Members of Parliament from the opposition (Perikatan Nasional) in parliament. Impacted Malaysian mothers, Adlyn, Aini, Jamaliah, Danial (Jamaliah's impacted adult son), Mashitah and Mimi led the briefing, sharing their firsthand experiences and struggles with gender unequal citizenship laws.



### Engagements with the Malaysian Senate – YB Senator Datuk Seri Zurainah Musa

This year, Family Frontiers also began engaging with Senators in the Malaysian Senate (Dewan Negara). Notably, a key ally and supportektr of the issue has been YB Senator Datuk Seri Zurainah Musa, who has been actively championing the cause in her own capacity prior to our engagement. As the amendment would require a two-third majority from the House of Representatives (Dewan Rakyat) and a two-third majority from the Senate (Dewan Negara), it was essential for Family Frontiers to build relationships with both chambers.



### Engagement with the Minister of Home Affairs and Ministry of Home Affairs

Between March and April 2023, Family Frontiers had direct engagements with the newly appointed Minister of Home Affairs, YB Senator Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution and officers from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

In March, Family Frontiers spoke to the Minister of Home Affairs regarding the challenge faced by Malaysian women in conferring citizenship to their children born overseas. As a result, in April, Family Frontiers was invited to engage in a consultation with officers from the Ministry of Home Affairs, specifically members of the Technical Amendment Committee tasked with studying proposed amendments addressing this issue.



### Lobbying with Members of Parliament

Lobbying Members of Parliament during ongoing Parliamentary sessions throughout the year was key to effectively engaging with a diverse array of MPs, maximising our outreach and impact within a limited timeframe.





### **Stakeholder Consultation on Proposed Citizenship Amendments by United Malays National Organisation (UMNO)'s Women and Family Council (HAWA), 14 July 2023**

Family Frontiers and impacted Malaysian mothers, Aini and Nik Elin participated in the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO)'s Women and Family Council (HAWA) stakeholder consultation on the proposed citizenship amendments by sharing the plight of Malaysian women in similar predicaments. The intervention prompted a call by the Council's Chairperson, urging the Government to promptly table the amendment granting Malaysian mothers married to foreign spouses equal rights to confer citizenship to their overseas-born children.



### **Briefing with Malaysian United Democratic Alliance (MUDA) on Proposed Citizenship Amendments, 25 July 2023**

Ahead of the 2023 State Elections, Malaysian mothers Patricia Low, Saweza Waat, and Gulzhan (a non-citizen wife to a Malaysian man) engaged with the election candidates and members from the Malaysian United Democratic Alliance (MUDA) and the Malaysian Socialist Party (PSM) regarding the reform and the challenges faced by non-citizen wives married to Malaysian men.



### Town Hall with Youth Activists Organised by Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2 November 2023

Family Frontiers' Programme Coordinator participated in a Town Hall with Youth Activists in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth and Sports. She represented the cluster on Statelessness, Refugees and Nationality Rights and spoke on the issues pertaining to these thematic areas and proposed policy reform to address them.



### National Trust Party (AMANAH) Women's Wing Convention, 22 December 2023

Family Frontiers was invited to the National Trust Party (AMANAH)'s Women's Wing Convention in December 2023. The commitment towards reform was acknowledged by the Chairperson of the Women's Wing, YB Datuk Aiman Athirah Sabu and key figures within the party during their welcome speeches. We also had individual engagements with the Chairperson and YB Lim Yi Wei, an Assemblywomen in the Selangor State Legislative Assembly.



# Public Outreach & Collaboration: Garnering Support Fostering Solidarity

To expand our network of allies and raise awareness on gender-equal citizenship laws, Family Frontiers continued to have strategic collaborations with diverse groups throughout the year.

## **Bar Council and Malaysian Law Students Network Panel on Citizenship, 7 April 2023**

Family Frontiers' Lead Coordinator participated in a panel discussion organised by the Bar Council and Malaysian Law Students Network on citizenship rights. During the panel, she spoke on the legal aspects related to citizenship, including the interpretation of the Constitution, the outcomes of Family Frontiers' case at the Court of Appeal, concerns regarding dual citizenship, delays in the amendment process, and the rights of children. Impacted mother, Mimi shared her story, providing firsthand insight into the challenges faced by Malaysian mothers impacted by unequal citizenship laws. Additionally, Family Frontiers' Research Coordinator discussed societal attitudes towards the issue and presented findings from a public perception survey on #PindaPerkara14.



### Advocacy Booths at Academic Institutions, 22 May, 24 & 25 June 2023

Family Frontiers collaborated with the Malaysian Institute for Debate and Public Speaking (MIDP) and Taylor's University to participate in a two-day event focused on promoting healthy discourse among youths on critical social, political, cultural, economic, environmental, and human rights issues in Malaysia.

During the event, Family Frontiers ran an advocacy booth to raise awareness on the plight of Malaysian mothers in their pursuit for equal citizenship rights. Impacted mothers, Bibie, Aniza, and Saweza, shared their personal experiences and challenges with more than 100 attendees and also had the opportunity to speak to Deputy Minister of Youth & Sports, YB Adam Adli, former Member of Parliament, Dr. Ong Kian Ming.



Family Frontiers also ran another advocacy booth during Sunway University's NGO Fair where Family Frontiers and impacted mother, Bibie managed to speak to 100 youths on gender unequal citizenship laws in Malaysia..



### **GCENR Youth ToT on Gender-Equal Nationality Rights, 6 September 2023**

Family Frontiers' Programme Coordinator and Research & Advocacy Coordinator facilitated a Youth Training of Trainers (ToT) with 12 youths on Gender-Equal Nationality Rights organised by the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights (GCENR) and the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI). The ToT session primarily focused on understanding the Malaysian Campaign for Equal Citizenship, including Family Frontiers' approaches and good practices.

### **UNICEF Young Leaders Showcase Panel Discussion, 20 November 2023**

Impacted adult child, Niba, spoke on a panel at the UNICEF Young Leaders Showcase Panel where she shared her lived experiences and the challenges she faces as a result of discriminatory citizenship laws.



### **Advocacy Booth and Performance at the Human Rights Day Festival Organised by the Malaysian Bar, 10 December 2023**

Family Frontiers participated in the Malaysian Bar's annual Human Rights Day Festival. Alongside our regular advocacy materials, we also introduced an interactive element — a snakes and ladders game (Malaysian citizenship edition), aimed at raising awareness on gender-unequal citizenship laws in Malaysia through a fun and engaging manner.



### Panel on Nationality Rights and Statelessness with SUHAKAM and the National University of Malaysia (UKM), 2 November 2023

Family Frontiers' Lead Coordinator spoke on a panel addressing Nationality Rights and Statelessness in collaboration with SUHAKAM and the National University of Malaysia (UKM). During the panel, she shed light on the repercussions of gender-unequal citizenship laws, emphasising their potential contribution to statelessness.



# MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS

Family Frontiers continued utilising mainstream and alternative media to increase public awareness and action towards gender-discriminatory citizenship laws to reach the wider Malaysian audience. By engaging with the media, FF ensures that citizenship and statelessness issues remain in the public spotlight, with 238 media mentions in 2023 alone, indicative of the issue's significance and the organisation's influence in shaping public discourse..



Malaysian mother, Rozita on Buletin FM, February 2023  
 Malaysian mother Rozita discussed gender unequal citizenship laws on Buletin FM, a local radio station, in response to the announcement by the Government regarding the proposed amendment for equal citizenship rights for Malaysian women. She shared her personal experiences and expressed optimism for the reform.



Source: Buletin FM

Malaysian mother, Ummal on Malaysia Hari Ini, 2 March 2023  
 Ummal, a Malaysian mother, shared her struggles in obtaining Malaysian citizenship for her non-citizen children on national television "Malaysia Hari Ini." She spoke on her lived experience and the challenges faced by many Malaysian mothers in similar circumstances.



Source: TV3 on Youtube

Malaysian mother, Patricia on Astro Awani, 15 March 2023  
 Patricia, an impacted Malaysian mother, spoke on Astro Awani to discuss the difficulties encountered by Malaysian mothers with non-citizen children when enrolling them in national schools. She also shed light on the impacts this has on the children and their families.



Source: Astro Awani

Malaysian mother, Aini on Astro Awani, 27 March 2023  
 Malaysian mother Aini shared her firsthand challenges with gender unequal citizenship laws on Astro Awani. She emphasised the struggles faced by mothers raising non-citizen children with special needs, especially concerning access to medical care.



Source: Astro Awani



# SOCIAL MEDIA



# ADVOCACY

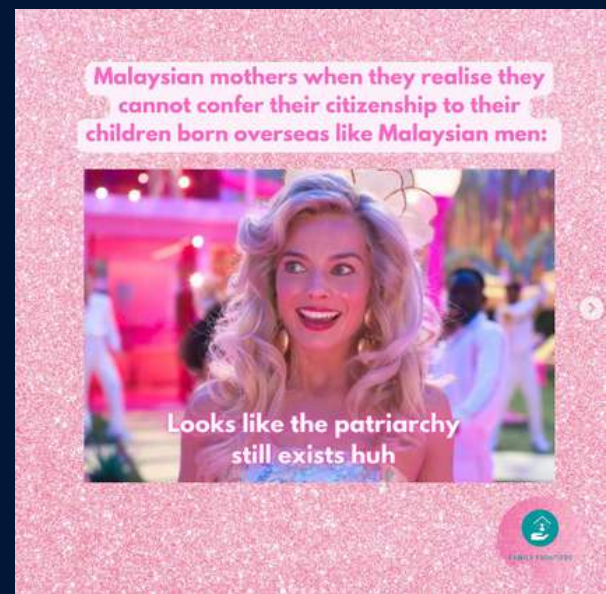
Family Frontiers intensified our online advocacy efforts to exert greater pressure on the Government for immediate action to achieve the reform. Central to these efforts were the diverse forms of content produced on our platforms, among them were infographics or explainers, mini documentaries highlighting the stories of impacted Malaysian mothers, debunking common misconceptions and calls to action. A particular strategy that proved to be effective in reaching new and wider audiences was leveraging online trends such as viral TikTok trends and memes.

Throughout the year, there were several posts that garnered significant traction across different platforms, spotlighting the plight of Malaysian mothers and their children which deeply resonated with the public.

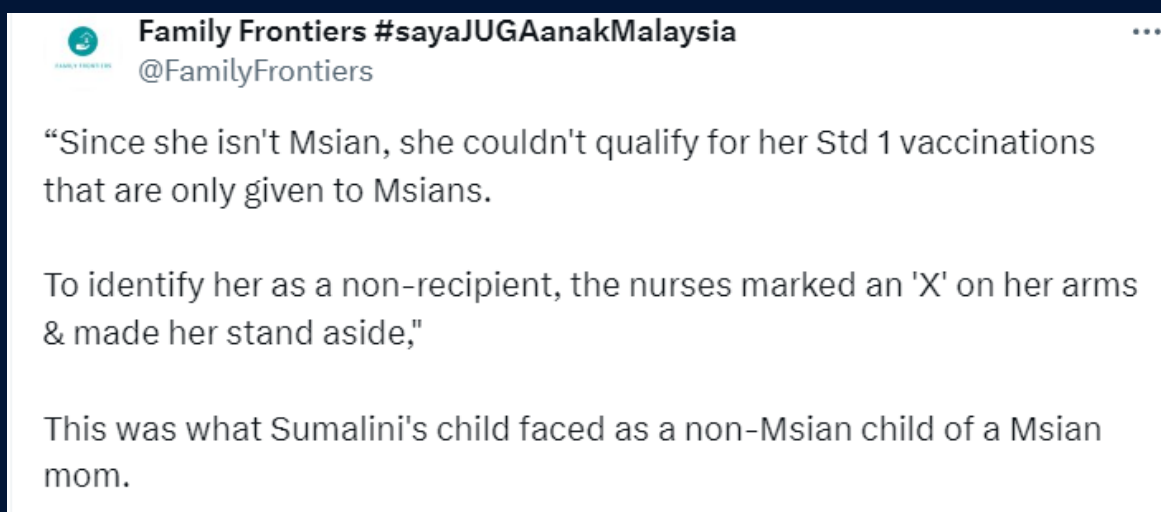
Malaysian mother, Rozita shared her personal experiences as an impacted mother through static posts.



Barbie Memes — the issue was encapsulated using Barbie Memes that were trending at the time to reach a larger audience



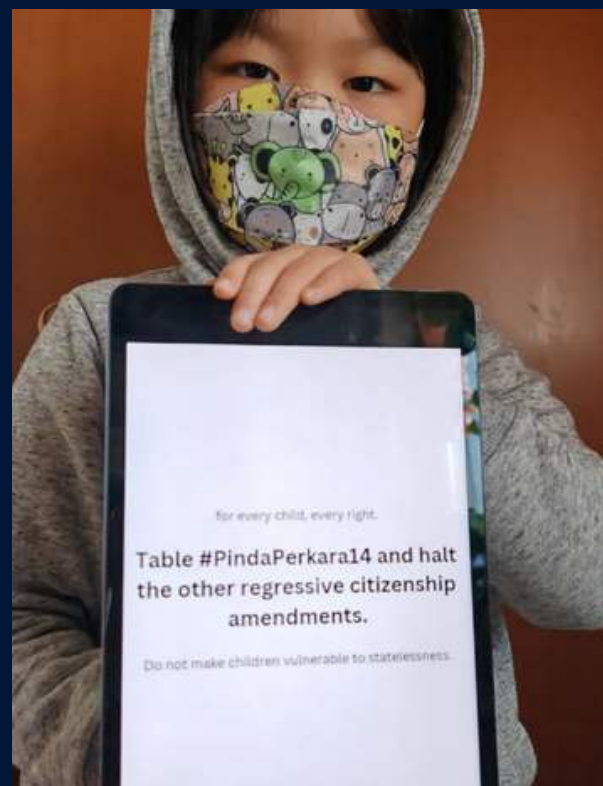
Malaysian mother, Sumalini sharing her daughter's story as an impacted child navigating the public education system. This story was publicised through a Twitter thread with a hook to increase chances of virality.



Normah, an impacted Malaysian mother shared her story through a TikTok video



Malaysian children take action to urge the Government to halt the regressive citizenship amendments



Family Frontiers reached an estimated 36,200 people through their Facebook and 50,700 people on Instagram and gained 500,000 Tweet impressions on Twitter. Family Frontiers also garnered 305,626 views on TikTok.

# SERVICE



# DELIVERY

In 2023, Family Frontiers continued providing support to Malaysian binational families through enquiries, case management and referrals via the Foreign Spouses Support Group (FSSG) Facebook public service platform. This encompassed addressing areas concerning visas, passes, permits, Permanent Residence, access to healthcare and education, marriage registration, domestic violence, employment rights and endorsement to work.

**FSSG made a total of 60 public announcements and responded to 1,640 direct queries this year.**

Apart from the FSSG public service platform, Family Frontiers also adopts other methods of offering support to impacted communities to ensure alternative avenues to access information. This year Family Frontiers had its first community gathering with Malaysian binational families.





# GLOBAL OUTREACH

Family Frontiers continued taking up spaces on the regional and global platforms. Global outreach efforts have been pivotal in increasing the campaign's visibility on the global front. These partnerships have helped highlight the issue of gender-discriminatory citizenship laws in Malaysia and mobilise support from the international community, adding further pressure on the Government to take action. Engagement with United Nations (UN) bodies has also facilitated these efforts, as Family Frontiers consistently utilises UN treaty body processes and complaint mechanisms to draw attention to the issue and advocate for change on a global scale.

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## Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

Family Frontiers led a joint submission on gender discriminatory nationality rights, statelessness in Malaysia and Malaysian binational families with Development of Human Resources for Rural Areas (DHRRA) Malaysia and Voice of the Children for the 4th Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Cycle. As part of our efforts to inform member states on Malaysia's progress with regards to nationality rights, Family Frontiers engaged with 6 embassies and consulates in Malaysia (Australia, Brazil, Canada, the EU Delegation, Indonesia & South Africa)



While Family Frontiers did not make an intervention during the pre-session in November held in Geneva, our Programme Manager spoke to 13 Permanent Missions in Geneva on the regressive amendments proposed by the Government and the delay towards the reform.



As a result, Malaysia received 11 recommendations on nationality rights and 10 recommendations on statelessness during Malaysia's Fourth Universal Periodic Review (UPR) at the 45th Session of the UPR Review on 25 January 2024.





## Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Family Frontiers will be participating in the upcoming CEDAW review by making a submission on gender discriminatory citizenship laws. This builds on the work already done by Family Frontiers in engaging with CEDAW. In February 2023 Family Frontiers, together with other national CSOs, made a joint submission on the development of critical issues and questions for the CEDAW 86th Pre-Sessional Working Group.

## A Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 67 Virtual Parallel Event organised and hosted by Equality Bahamas, March 15 2023

Family Frontiers' Lead Coordinator spoke at the 'Feminist Methodologies and Practices: Lessons from COVID-19' during this virtual parallel event.

## Global Summit on Gender Nationality Laws, 13 June 2023

Family Frontiers and Gaithiri Siva, an impacted Malaysian mother within our network, attended the Global Summit on Achieving Gender Equality in Nationality Laws in Geneva on 13 June 2023 organised by our global partner, the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights (GCENR), co-organised by UNHCR, UNICEF and UN Women. Gaithiri shared her own lived experience as an impacted mother on the panel, Gaithiri Siva said: "Gender discriminatory citizenship laws undermine the autonomy of women and our ability to make decisions for ourselves and the wellbeing of our children.



## ASEAN Civil Society Conference/People's Forum (ACSC/APF), 1 - 3 September 2023

Family Frontiers participated in the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/People's Forum (ACSC/APF) in Jakarta. Family Frontiers' Lead Coordinator spoke on the issue of gender discriminatory citizenship laws in the Malaysian context during a panel. Family Frontiers' Research & Policy Coordinator performed a spoken word piece during the forum.



## International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP Asia Pacific) Learning Exchange in Bangkok, 26 - 28 September 2023

Family Frontiers took part in the IWRAP Asia Pacific Feminist Learning Exchange in Bangkok where our Lead Coordinator spoke on Gender Discriminatory Laws during a workshop.

## Global South Women's Forum 2023 organised by International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP Asia Pacific), 28 & 30 October 2023

Impacted Malaysian mother, Patricia Low spoke on a Gender Equal Nationality Rights panel at the Global South Women's Forum organised by International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP/ Asia Pacific). Family Frontiers' Lead Coordinator also contributed to the event by speaking on a panel, 'Understanding the intersections of gender, immigration detention, and alternatives to detention'.



An illustration featuring several hands in shades of tan and brown, reaching towards a central purple heart. The background is a vibrant magenta. The text is centered over the heart.

**OUR  
HEARTFELT  
GRATITUDE**

## Donors and Contributors

We are deeply grateful for the generosity of our donors and contributors, including individuals who contributed through our fundraising platform. Your support has allowed us to continue our important work in advocating for the rights of Malaysian women and children impacted by gender-discriminatory citizenship laws. Your contributions have enabled us to mobilise the movement for gender equal citizenship rights for all Malaysian mothers and children, and speak up on the rights of Malaysian binational families.

- Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights (GCENR)
- Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI)
- Nationality for All (NFA)
- Women's Fund Asia
- Porticus
- Dunn Family Foundation
- Third World Network

We would also like to thank all individuals who contributed through our Simply Giving fundraising platform.

## Collaborators, Allies & Supporters

Our collaborators and supporters have been instrumental in the growth of our campaign. We are grateful for the partnerships we have formed with civil society organisations, youth groups, and members of the legal fraternity. Your support has strengthened our voice and allowed us to reach a wider audience with our message. Your solidarity has been a source of inspiration, and we look forward to continuing to work together towards our shared goal of ending gender-discriminatory citizenship laws in Malaysia.

- Angkatan Wanita Amanah Nasional (AWAN)
- Bar Council Human Rights Committee
- Child Rights Coalition Malaysia (CRCM)
- CSO-SDG Alliance
- Development of Human Resources for Rural Areas, Malaysia (DHRRA-Malaysia)
- Office of the Children's Commissioner, SUHAKAM

## Collaborators, Allies & Supporters

- Freedom Film Network
- Global Campaign for Equal Citizenship Rights (GCENR)
- Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI)
- Justice For Sisters
- Knowledge and Rights with Young People Through Safe Spaces (KRYSS)
- Lawyer Kamek for Change (LK4C)
- Lawyers for Liberty
- Malaysian Bar
- Malaysian Law Students' Network (MLSN)
- Malaysian Institute for Diplomacy & Public Speaking (MIDP)
- Nationality For All (NFA)
- PACOS Trust
- Persatuan Kesedaran Komuniti Selangor (EMPOWER)
- Sabah Women's Action Resource Group (SAWO)
- Sarawak Women for Women Society (SWWS)
- Sisters in Islam (SIS)
- Suara Rakyat Malaysia (SUARAM)
- Sunway Student Volunteers (SSV)
- Suruhanjaya Hak Asasi Manusia Malaysia (SUHAKAM)
- Tenaganita
- The Fourth
- Third World Network (TWN)
- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
- University Malaya Law Society
- Women's Aid Organisation (WAO)
- Women's Centre for Change (WCC)
- Women's Wing of the Malaysian Chinese Association (Wanita MCA)

## Our Legal Team

We extend our sincere appreciation to our legal team at Messrs. Nijar & Advocates and Messrs. Joshua Aaron Keet, who have demonstrated unwavering dedication in advancing our cause. Your tireless efforts, expertise, and steadfast commitment to advocating for gender equal citizenship rights have played a pivotal role in attaining the significant milestones we've achieved thus far. We are grateful for the extensive hours and diligent work you've invested in this endeavour. Your invaluable contribution has been instrumental in our campaign to challenge discriminatory laws and promote the rights of women and children in Malaysia.

## Our Community

We wish to convey our deepest appreciation to our community of Malaysian binational families and Malaysian mothers advocating for citizenship for their children, for your resilience and bravery in speaking out, sharing your narratives, and championing your rights. We understand the challenges you've faced on this journey, and your courage serves as a constant inspiration to us. Your determination and resolve to push for your rights have been the cornerstone of our campaign and team, and we are privileged to stand in solidarity with you every step of the way.

We acknowledge that sharing personal stories is never easy, yet your voices have been instrumental in raising awareness about this issue. Your experiences have shed light on the profound impacts of gender-discriminatory citizenship laws on Malaysian women and their children.

We are dedicated to amplifying your voices and ensuring that your struggles receive the attention they deserve. Rest assured, we will persist in our fight for equal citizenship rights until justice prevails. Thank you for your courage, resilience, and unwavering commitment to equality.



FAMILY FRONTIERS

## **Association of Family Support & Welfare Selangor & KL (Family Frontiers)**



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