

# UMS team wins gold with 'native' xylophone

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KOTA KINABALU: A new xylophone invention comprising Sabah native elements known as "The U9 Xylophone" won a gold medal at the just-ended Universiti Malaysia Innovation and Research Competition 2012 on May 23.

The U9 Xylophone idea was derived from research done on Sabah traditional musical instruments by a group of School of Arts Studies and UMS lecturers.

They are Jinky Jane Simeon, Dr Low Kok On, Norhayati Ayob and Esterlina Moo.

As Multi-ethnic groups in Sabah and Sarawak are rich in traditional musical instruments. However, music classrooms across the nation are currently dominated by

various types of imported instruments like piano, recorder, keyboard, etc, which are costly or lack traditional elements," said team leader Jinky.

In Sabah, the traditional xylophones popular among the Kadazandusun, Bajau, Suluk etc are kulintangan (metal xylophone) and gabang kayu (wooden idiophone). The kulintangan is an expensive musical instrument because metals are hard to obtain in villages. The metal xylophone was later modified to wooden idiophone known as gabang kayu by the Orang Sungai, Bajau and Suluk community.

The U9 xylophone set, a new innovation product was modified from the kulintangan (metal xylophone) and gabang kayu (wooden idiophone) by using bamboo instead. It can be played in three different ranges and tested to ensure that it is suitable for school children ranging from preschool to primary three levels.

It provides music teachers and children with an effective and affordable musical instrument for teaching and learning purposes. This unique instrument has many features not found on xylophones currently sold on the market.



From left: Norhayati, Dr Low, Jinky and Esterlina.