

Still a Dividend Play; Keep BUY

Malaysia Results Review

23 August 2023

**Utilities** | Utilities

# **Buy** (Maintained)

Target Price (Return): MYR1.05 (31%) Price (Market Cap): MYR0.80 (USD347m) ESG score: 3 (out of 4)

Avg Daily Turnover (MYR/USD)

0.49m/0.11m

### **Analyst**

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# **Share Performance (%)**

	YTD	1m	3m	6m	12m
Absolute	(7.5)	(1.9)	(3.6)	(10.1)	(14.9)
Relative	(4.6)	(4.6)	(5.9)	(9.2)	(12.5)
52-wk Price low	/high (MYF	?)		0.80	0.96

# Taliworks Corporation (TWK MK) ·Relative to FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI Index (RHS) 105 0.80

Source: Bloomberg

# Keep BUY with new SOP-derived MYR1.05 TP from MYR1.01, 31% upside, c.8% FY24F yield. 1H23 core profit of MYR22m (+2% YoY) trailed

estimates - contributing 35% to both ours and Street's full-year projections. The negative deviation was due to higher-than-expected costs and slow progress for Sungai Rasau project. A second interim dividend of 1.65 sen per share was declared in 2Q23 (YTD FY23: 3.3 sen per share). We favour Taliworks for its defensive earnings base, attractive c.8% FY24F yield, and attractive valuation of 11.6x FY24F EV/EBITDA (-2SD below 5-year mean).

Taliworks Corporation (TWK MK)

- 2Q23 core earnings stood at MYR11.8m (+7% YoY) following a 6% YoY jump in the water segment's EBIT. TWK water segment's better performance was due to the increase in the Bulk Water Supply Rate effective 1 Jan 2023 and higher electricity rebates, which offset the lower volume of metered sales (-2.1% YoY) for Sungai Selangor Water Treatment Plant Phase 1 operations. Meanwhile, the construction arm only saw an EBIT of MYR52k in 2Q23 (2Q22: MYR678k), mainly due to slower-thanexpected progress. We believe progress should pick up from 4Q23, assuming the requisite approvals from the authorities are secured by then.
- 2Q23 average daily traffic (ADT) for Grand Saga (51% owned) was higher 6% YoY while Grand Sepadu highway (37.5% owned) saw a flat growth of -0.3% YoY. ADT growth in the Grand Saga highway was due to the opening of Sungai Besi Ulu-Kelang Elevated Expressway but earnings growth was capped by higher amortisation costs - leading to a flat YoY EBIT growth for the toll business in 2Q23. Toll compensation (estimated c.MYR8-9m) may be received in 3Q23 or 4Q23. The renewable energy segment registered an EBIT of MYR3.9m in 2Q23 (2Q22: MYR2m), reflecting better performance post solar panel replacement at the SaTerm solar facility. Hence, the total energy output rose 31% YoY higher to 5.7k MWh in 2Q23 vs 4.4k MWh in 2Q22.
- We adjust our FY23-25F earnings by -12%/+4%/+3% following a net impact after: i) we dial down on the progress assumptions for the Sungai Rasau project for FY23 but backload further recognition in FY24/FY25; and ii) imputing a higher loss estimate for its waste management associate (amid the absence of a tariff revision plus higher operating expenditure). As the earnings increase is for FY24F and FY25F - our SOP valuation (with its valuation base already brought forward to FY24F) derives a new MYR1.05 TP (from MYR1.01) after imputing an ESG premium of 0% based on an ESG score of 3.
- A long-term catalyst is TWK's potential involvement in phase 2 of the Sungai Rasau Water Supply Scheme - expected in CY25/CY26.
- Key risks include slower-than-expected economic recovery and changes in government policies.

Forecasts and Valuation	Dec-21	Dec-22	Dec-23F	Dec-24F	Dec-25F
Total turnover (MYRm)	303	338	420	736	661
Recurring net profit (MYRm)	79	54	56	79	91
Recurring net profit growth (%)	35.5	(31.7)	4.0	42.3	15.0
Recurring P/E (x)	20.54	30.06	28.91	20.31	17.65
P/B (x)	1.8	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.3
P/CF (x)	12.23	18.62	11.49	11.60	9.82
Dividend Yield (%)	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3
EV/EBITDA (x)	10.15	11.86	11.07	9.68	8.32
Return on average equity (%)	8.4	6.5	7.5	11.0	12.9
Net debt to equity (%)	net cash	15.1	10.3	12.6	14.5

Source: Company data, RHB

# Overall ESG Score: 3 (out of 4)

### E: GOOD

TWK integrates environmental management throughout the life cycle of each project. Some practices include tracking, managing and minimising air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, and waste and effluents generated from across all areas of operations.

#### S: GOOD

TWK prioritises work-life balance, and as such, provides for employees' welfare and well-being towards better integration of life and career. Employee training and development costs were up more than 100% to MYR1.1m in 2019, and up-to-date health & safety policies are in place.

### G: GOOD

While some elements of integrated reporting are embodied in the annual report, overall, it is not an integrated report based on the parameters set by the International Integrated Reporting Council. Only 16% of the board is represented by women, and the Remuneration Committee does not provide oversight on remuneration for senior management. TWK engages a third-party investor relations outfit to facilitate communications with the investment community, with periodic meetings held.

Small cap stocks are defined as companies with a market capitalisation of less than USD0.5bn.



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# **Financial Exhibits**

Asia Malaysia Utilities

**Taliworks Corporation** 

 $\mathsf{TWK}\,\mathsf{MK}$ 

Buy

Valuation basis

SOP Valuation

#### Key drivers

- i. Stable operations;
- ii. Favourable outcome on tariff hikes;
- iii. Lower losses at associate companies

#### Key risks

Key risks include slower-than-expected economic recovery and changes in government policies.

### **Company Profile**

Taliworks Corp is a pure-play infrastructure company primarily engaged in water treatment, supply and distribution – which involves management, operations & maintenance (O&M) of water treatment plants and water distribution systems. It is also engaged in highway toll concessionaires (O&M), engineering & construction, and waste management

Financial summary (MYR)	Dec-21	Dec-22	Dec-23F	Dec-24F	Dec-25F
Recurring EPS	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.05
DPS	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07
BVPS	0.45	0.39	0.35	0.36	0.34
Return on average equity (%)	8.4	6.5	7.5	11.0	12.9

Valuation metrics	Dec-21	Dec-22	Dec-23F	Dec-24F	Dec-25F
Recurring P/E (x)	20.54	30.06	28.91	20.31	17.65
P/B (x)	1.8	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.3
FCF Yield (%)	8.1	5.1	8.4	8.3	9.9
Dividend Yield (%)	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3
EV/EBITDA (x)	10.15	11.86	11.07	9.68	8.32
EV/EBIT (x)	13.01	15.27	14.93	12.54	10.31

Income statement (MYRm)	Dec-21	Dec-22	Dec-23F	Dec-24F	Dec-25F
Total turnover	303	338	420	736	661
Gross profit	140	137	116	141	173
EBITDA	152	150	157	182	214
Depreciation and amortisation	(33)	(33)	(41)	(42)	(41)
Operating profit	119	117	116	141	173
Net interest	(19)	(18)	(16)	(14)	(17)
Pre-tax profit	114	82	96	128	163
Taxation	(12)	(15)	(23)	(31)	(39)
Reported net profit	79	55	56	79	91
Recurring net profit	79	54	56	79	91

Cash flow (MYRm)	Dec-21	Dec-22	Dec-23F	Dec-24F	Dec-25F
Change in working capital	10	(15)	7	(12)	(10)
Cash flow from operations	132	87	140	139	164
Capex	(1)	(4)	(5)	(5)	(5)
Cash flow from investing activities	70	226	101	(13)	(9)
Dividends paid	(133)	(133)	(100)	(133)	(133)
Cash flow from financing activities	(204)	(326)	(163)	(165)	(192)
Cash at beginning of period	87	62	49	127	89
Net change in cash	(2)	(13)	78	(38)	(36)
Ending balance cash	84	49	127	89	53

Balance sheet (MYRm)	Dec-21	Dec-22	Dec-23F	Dec-24F	Dec-25F
Total cash and equivalents	409	170	199	175	152
Tangible fixed assets	6	132	132	132	132
Total investments	270	251	240	235	232
Total assets	1,943	1,854	1,882	1,854	1,764
Short-term debt	30	30	29	30	30
Total long-term debt	329	299	269	269	260
Total liabilities	786	806	911	866	817
Total equity	1,157	1,048	971	988	947
Total liabilities & equity	1,943	1,854	1,882	1,854	1,764

Key metrics	Dec-21	Dec-22	Dec-23F	Dec-24F	Dec-25F
Revenue growth (%)	(4.8)	11.6	24.3	75.3	(10.3)
Recurrent EPS growth (%)	35.5	(31.7)	4.0	42.3	15.0
Gross margin (%)	46.2	40.5	27.6	19.1	26.1
Operating EBITDA margin (%)	50.3	44.4	37.3	24.7	32.4
Net profit margin (%)	25.9	16.3	13.3	10.8	13.8
Dividend payout ratio (%)	169.5	241.3	238.5	167.5	145.7
Capex/sales (%)	0.4	1.1	1.3	0.7	0.8
Interest cover (x)	6.22	6.49	7.37	9.86	10.15

Source: Company data, RHB



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# Results at a glance

Figure 1: TWK's results

FYE Dec (MYRm)	2Q22	1Q23	2Q23	QoQ (%)	YoY (%)	1H22	1H23	YoY (%)	Comments
Revenue	85.7	93.5	89.0	-4.8	3.8	160.6	182.6	13.7	Increase in the Bulk Water Supply Rate effective from 1 Jan 2023 and higher electricity rebates
EBIT	25.8	24.3	27.3	12.2	5.6	49.2	51.6	4.8	,
EBIT margin (%)	30%	26%	31%			31%	28%		
Finance cost	(4.5)	(4.4)	(4.3)	1.8	3.3	(9.0)	(8.7)	2.7	
Share of JV	0.5	0.5	0.2	-51.0	-53.0	1.1	0.7	-30.5	
Share of associate	(4.1)	(4.8)	(4.6)	3.7	-11.3	(6.5)	(9.3)	-43.0	
Pre-tax profit	17.8	15.7	18.6	19.0	4.9	34.8	34.3	-1.5	
Pre-tax margin (%)	21%	17%	21%			22%	19%		
Tax	(5.4)	(4.0)	(5.2)	-30.3	3.9	(10.9)	(9.2)	16.1	
Effective tax rate (%)	30%	25%	28%			31%	27%		
Minority interest	(1.3)	(1.6)	(1.6)	-1.3	-24.4	(2.2)	(3.3)	-45.9	
Net profit	11.0	10.1	11.8	17.3	6.8	21.6	21.9	1.1	
Core profit	11.0	10.1	11.8	17.3	6.8	21.4	21.9	2.4	Below expectations
Core net margin (%)	13%	11%	13%			13%	12%		

Source: Company data, RHB

Figure 2: TWK's segmental results

FYE Dec (MYRm)	2Q22	1Q23	2Q23	QoQ (%)	YoY (%)	1H22	1H23	YoY (%)	Comments
Revenue Water treatment, supply and distribution	46.2	52.0	52.1	0.2	12.9	91.4	104.2	14.0	Increase in the Bulk Water Supply Rate effective from 1 January 2023 and higher electricity rebates
Construction	11.5	12.0	7.2	-40.2	-37.8	19.3	19.1	-0.9	
Toll highway	21.3	21.9	21.9	-0.1	2.4	41.9	43.8	4.3	
Others	1.3	1.3	1.1	-15.1	-15.1	2.5	2.3	-7.6	
Renewables	5.4	6.4	6.8	6.1	25.0	5.4	13.2	>100	
EBIT Water treatment, supply and distribution	16.0	15.1	16.9	12.2	6.2	31.6	32.0	1.3	
Construction	0.7	0.2	0.1	-78.2	-92.3	0.7	0.3	-59.4	
Toll highway	9.1	9.2	9.1	-0.4	0.1	18.0	18.3	1.6	Higher amortisation costs
Others	(2.0)	(2.8)	(2.7)	3.6	-37.7	(3.2)	(5.5)	-73.8	
Renewables	2.0	2.6	3.9	47.9	89.5	2.0	6.5	>100	

Source: Company data, RHB



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Figure 3: Taliworks' SOP valuation

Highway assets	Stake	FY24F FCFE	Per share	Remark
Grand Saga	51%	694.4	0.34	WACC 6%, concession up to 2045 with four toll rate hikes assumed.
Grand Sepadu (45%	450/	440.4	0.00	MAGG 697
economic benefit)	45%	119.4	0.06	WACC 6%, concession up to 2032 with two toll rate hikes assumed.
Water assets	100%	459.4	0.23	WACC 6%, concession up to 2036 with contracted base supply rate assumed. No extension to Langkawi water asset.
Waste management asset	35%	312.8	0.16	WACC 6%, concession up to 2033.
		P/E		
Construction	100%	12.0	0.09	We think that this target P/E is fair as it is within the range ascribed to construction peers under our coverage.
Solar Assets	100%	204.5	0.10	WACC 7.0%, 13 years remaining for concession.
Net cash/(debt)		143.0	0.07	Adjusted to exclude net debts included in FCFE calculation for Grand Saga, water and solar assets.
No. of shares (m)		2,015.8		
Intrinsic value per share		2,107.2	1.05	
0% ESG discount/premium			0.00	
Target price			1.05	

Source: Company data, RHB

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# **Recommendation Chart**

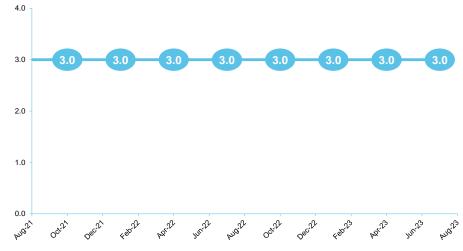


Source: RHB, Bloomberg

Date	Recommendation	Target Price	Price
2023-05-23	Buy	1.01	0.82
2023-02-17	Buy	1.06	0.88
2022-11-22	Buy	1.06	0.88
2022-11-02	Buy	1.08	0.92
2022-08-24	Buy	1.10	0.93
2022-05-27	Buy	1.12	0.93
2022-02-23	Buy	1.03	0.93
2021-11-16	Buy	0.98	0.86
2021-08-24	Buy	0.94	0.85
2021-05-20	Buy	0.94	0.85
2021-03-01	Buy	0.98	0.83
2020-11-17	Buy	0.98	0.82
2020-08-21	Buy	0.98	0.87
2020-07-02	Buy	0.97	0.86

Source: RHB, Bloomberg

# **ESG** Rating History



Source: RHB

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Buy: Share price may exceed 10% over the next 12 months

Trading Buy: Share price may exceed 15% over the next 3 months, however longer-

term outlook remains uncertain

Neutral: Share price may fall within the

Il: Share price may fall within the range of +/- 10% over the next

12 months

Take Profit: Target price has been attained. Look to accumulate at lower levels Sell: Share price may fall by more than 10% over the next 12 months

Not Rated: Stock is not within regular research coverage

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