

# K a b a r I t a h



Edition 16: October 2007-January 2008

## Improving Livelihoods through Collaboration

In early December representatives from 14 villages gathered in Tumbang Miri for two days to review the year's activities and to make plans for 2008. Prior to this, each village conducted its own review in preparation for this gathering.

Altogether 43 people took part, including five from Gunung Mas district government. This was the first time district staff took part in our annual review. They were there primarily as observers, but they also provided details of the district's work plans for 2008, representing Planning; Industry, Trade & Cooperatives; and Agriculture. Their inputs were helpful in synchronizing government plans with village plans.

### Reviewing Our Experience

Day One was primarily a review session, looking at three key areas: (1) the participatory planning process; (2) institutional relations and arrangements; and (3) financial and technical support.

- Seven new villages instigated participatory planning in 2007, but the quality of the results varied widely. Some villages participated very actively during the four day initial process, and others much less so. As this is the very first step in a longer process that provides inputs into the annual government planning cycle, if the quality of action at the beginning is poor, the benefits in terms of support from government and other quarters is also likely to be poor.

- Institutional relationships in all villages are currently running well. This is a critical factor to ensure smooth delivery of support from government and YTS. However, there still remain difficulties in establishing positive working relations with the new subdistrict heads.



*Selvia Neneng leads discussion on village review for Kahut District*

- YTS directed technical and financial support to 19 villages in 2007. The focus was on improving skills in three areas: raising yields in jungle rubber plantings; raising healthier and more productive pigs, and improving the quality of chicken stocks. Levels of participation in these programs varied from village to village usually dependent upon the quality of the relationship between the economic working groups and the village administration. The stronger and more cooperative these relationships are, the greater the level of participation from villagers.

- In the afternoon of Day One, the representative from the district planning office, Kaban, provided advice on how to improve the annual planning submissions to the district. It was decided to schedule the village level planning starting 15 January in the furthestmost village up each of the three rivers, and then work down river village-by-village. With this clear, advance schedule, it is anticipated that both villagers and government staff will be more actively involved, thereby making the results more representative of villager's needs.

### Consolidating Our Plans

Day Two was devoted to consolidating all of the village plans for 2008. Overall, there still is a wish to have YTS facilitate greater cooperation between villagers and local government; and to provide funds and other support to improve productivity of rubber, upland rice, pigs, and fish.

The very successful village nursery experiment in Tumbang Posu has attracted a great deal of interest from other villages that want to replicate this success. This simple, low cost nursery is managed entirely by villagers themselves, with a small amount of external technical and financial support. It is highly efficient and empowers villagers to take charge of their own seedling needs.

At the end of the two day session, it was very clear that this form of collaboration between villagers and YTS has strengthened the quality of governance within participating villages, and has improved the knowledge, skills and livelihoods of villagers involved in the economic interest groups.

## Editorial

The close of the year is a good time for reflection about the past and the immediate future. 2007 was characterized by expansion, with an increase in the number of staff and a move into East Kalimantan.

In Central Kalimantan we now have systemized our approach, and have two-person field teams based in three subdistricts in the Upper Kahayan River catchment. Each team focuses on the villages in one tributary of the Kahayan. There are about 10 villages in each tributary and we are active in six or seven of these in each tributary. In 2008, we intend to cover as many of the remaining villages as we can.

In early November, we launched a major initiative in East Kalimantan, in three villages in Sekatak subdistrict. This was the beginning of our community-led planning process, which in January will feed into the Government's annual planning initiative.

We found some interesting differences between the villages in East Kalimantan and those in Central Kalimantan. Notably, communities in the eastern province receive far higher support for infrastructure development, than those in the central province. However their agricultural practices are not as advanced, with very little cash crop activities, such as rubber. They also have much higher levels of illiteracy. Interestingly, we faced a much stronger 'handout' mentality there as well.

Despite these differences, the process went very well, with a good level of local participation. The follow up steps for engaging with local Government planning in January are well underway.

Our official engagement with UNIDO's Global Mercury Project ended in April, but we continued to work with gold shops in the town of Kereng Pangi, and were able to achieve 100% adoption of the mercury capture and recycling units. In October, we assessed the results, and convened a small workshop with district government to share our findings. Just this month, we launched [www.borneomercury.com](http://www.borneomercury.com) our website on the project, which contains major documents, photos and video material. Please have a look at it and let us know what you think.

I would like to thank everyone for their interest and support, with special thanks to our hardworking staff. May you all have a happy and successful 2008.

**Bardolf Paul**  
Director

## 100% Adoption of Mercury Recycling Units

The benefits of fumehood modification are a healthier environment and reduced costs from recycling mercury.

After closure of the UNIDO Global Mercury Project in April 2007, YTS continued to monitor the situation in the town of Kereng Pangi where large quantities of mercury vapour were being released from gold shops that were processing gold-mercury amalgam from nearby gold fields.

We also continued to provide technical support to gold shops wanting to install mercury capture and recycle units. During the project, 17 gold shops installed these units. In the following six months, 19 more units were delivered and installed, resulting in 100% coverage of all the gold shops in Kereng Pangi.

At the end of this period, YTS conducted a small survey to try to quantify the amount of mercury being captured and recycled. A controlled test on one of the units showed that more than 75% of the mercury burned was directly recovered from the capture unit. However in looking at the recovery rate in some of the other shops, it rose to as high as 80-90%. The monitoring revealed that a total of 645 kilograms would be recovered in 2007, and an estimated 900 kilograms in 2008.

On 8 November, YTS presented the results of the monitoring in a small workshop attended mainly by district government staff. The workshop attracted 15 staff from five service departments – Environment, Mining, Health, Education, and Trade & Industry. Several local NGO representatives also attended. The Vice District Head, Yan Teng Lie, opened the event, and discussions were chaired by the Head of Environment Services, Yapeth D. Nanjan.

Each of the five service departments made a commitment to include some aspect of the ongoing campaign in their 2008 program. YTS pledged to support these commitments by providing information on the technology, and other support and materials, as required.



*"The mercury recycling unit is very helpful for me because I get a benefit from recycled mercury : I can reuse it for myself or sell it to miners."*

Alkaromah,  
Gold Shop Owner

Alkaromah demonstrates the mercury capture unit

## Branching Out in East Kalimantan



workshop, which was hosted by the office of the Subdistrict Head; immediately followed by four-days of action-learning events, in each of the Dayak villages of Terindak, Bunau and Tenggiling.

Over this period, community members were assisted in evaluating their livelihood activities, and their own systems of production; a process which provides a revealing picture of the prevailing socio-economic conditions in the village, for the benefit of all.

Furthermore, by discussing and documenting the ways in which problems are faced when conducting livelihood activities, villagers were able to study the realities of their environment and collectively consider how to plan for future success.

The philosophy behind this approach is to institute a culture of self-reliance from the outset. YTS will continue to facilitate this process, and build capacity in self-organisation and in the management of support programs initiated by villagers themselves.

The villages are now creating their own development plans, which will be formally submitted into the government's planning process for 2008.

When Kalimantan Gold Corporation began drilling in the new Jelai concession in Bulungan District, it recognised that the exploration phase would provide YTS with a number of years in which to work towards community empowerment: building local capacity and strengthening local management systems, so that local people will be in a better position to fully utilise any benefits that might result from a mine.

Following the systematic methodology developed in Central Kalimantan, YTS's approach in East Kalimantan has once

again been to take Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) as the starting point.

A successful PRA is one in which the community meets together to map their own socio-economic and physical landscape; to study their own land use, and to examine the make-up of their own households; all of which keeps good facilitators very busy indeed.

So it was that a seven-person team spent two weeks in November: first by holding a three-day training

### Customary Land Use

Eighteen village communities live side-by-side along the Sekatak River in Bulungan, East Kalimantan. These settlements were formed in the 1970's so government could more easily provide services to communities scattered widely throughout the surrounding forest.

Village livelihoods are based on using forest resources to meet daily needs, and for lucrative sources of income, such as wild honey or gaharu. Apart from hunting and collecting, the customary land use is rice cultivation.

Lacking rights to harvest timber, villagers are unwilling to replant their rice fields with timber trees, or practice any kind of forestry that might allow them to manage the forest sustainably. Thus, the Dayak Berusu people still maintain their time-honoured agricultural pattern, while facing mounting pressures from other users, including industrial scale oil palm plantations.

Furthermore, local communities are unfamiliar with raising commercial tree crops such as cocoa, rubber, or oil palm, and are only beginning to consider them as viable alternatives. It nevertheless is possible to integrate these commercial species with natural forests in small scale agroforestry systems.

Making a transition to cultivating commercial tree species is often risky, as people need to invest their time, energy and money in new and unfamiliar activities. It is often better to focus firstly on improving existing livelihood activities, making them more productive and more economically rewarding.

YTS intends to provide training and technical assistance to villagers to improve sustainable agricultural forms of economic growth, and to achieve greater integration into the commercial economy.



*Examining rice productivity in Tenggiling*

## Tumbang Posu's Success



Weeding respacing seedlings in the village nursery

Tumbang Posu, a small village of 47 households in the upper Kahayan River, is a remarkable success since joining the YTS development support program in 2006. Posu is the only village that fully utilizes the Rp 10M annual allotment from YTS for technical support; and so far has received government support for 25 pigs, a new village road, five riverbank staircases, and funds to build a church.

All of this is the result of their Village Development Plan and the very cohesive relationship between villagers and village institutions.

The key points to their success are:

- (1) All the main institutions Village Head and staff, elected Village Council, Village Management Group, Economic Interest Groups cooperate and coordinate their efforts very well.
- (2) The members of the Village Management Group are well-respected and committed individuals that work together as a team to motivate the other villagers.
- (3) Members of the various Economic Interest Groups are actively involved in their group's activities, especially when outside technical experts come to conduct training sessions.

(4) The Village Management Group manages the money from the Village Development Fund in a very orderly and transparent way.

Villagers in the pig and rubber interest groups are learning a variety of new techniques: how to control pests and diseases; how to make and apply organic fertilizer and pesticide; establishing and maintaining a seedling nursery; seedling selection, spacing and planting; and plantation tending and tapping.

Warno, Head of the Management Group, expressed his happiness with the YTS collaboration: "We learned many useful things because of the YTS collaboration, and I hope we can continue to work together to improve our livelihoods".

We hope that other villages can learn from the Posu example, and improve the productivity of their livelihoods in a similar way.



Posu children in the nursery

## NGOs Push for Revenue Transparency in Indonesia

Transparent reporting on revenue flows from extractive industries is an essential component in ensuring equitable distribution of financial benefits from oil, gas and mining projects.

In November last year, YTS took part by invitation in a workshop for NGOs concerned with transparency in the extractive industries sector in Indonesia. This initiative is led by Publish-What-You-Pay International, funded by the Soros Foundation, together with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, local NGOs, and the Revenue Watch Institute.

The three day event went deeply into the issues regarding transparent reporting by companies and government in Indonesia. There is a strong reluctance to reveal this information because it could raise questions about who really is benefiting from the wealth generated from extractive industries.

The workshop agreed to establish a coalition of NGOs called the "Indonesian Coalition of Publish-What-You-Pay". This coalition will push the government to sign the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative protocol, in which it will agree to report openly on receipt and use of extractive revenues.

YTS will continue to be actively involved in this initiative.

### Agenda for 4th Quarter

#### February

- Subdistrict Musrenbang
- Identification of Interest Groups
- Village Management Training
- OZ Mine Seminar & Exhibition

#### March

- District Musrenbang
- Technical Expert Visits
- Training on Rubber and Pigs

#### April

- Training on Rubber and Pigs

### Kabar Itah

Kabar Itah is the quarterly newsletter of Yayasan Tambuhak Sinta (YTS), an affiliate of PT. Kalimantan Surya Kencana (KSK), a mineral exploration company.

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