

K a b a r I t a h



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Editorial

In recent months we have been exploring potential sites for the five-year project in artisanal and small-scale mining, better known as ASGM. Although we have already experienced this from our previous work in different locations, because this is a much lengthier and more in-depth project we are discovering just how varied, complex and dynamic these locations can be.

In a location four hours to the south west of our office, where there are about 300 miners and processors working, this is particularly noticeable. The site combines alluvial and hard rock mining, which is pretty unique. And then there are three ethnic groups working in different locations on the site – Dayak, Banjarese, Javanese, working with differing technologies.

Another notable aspect is that the site is located in a subdistrict, which is in the process of becoming a district. This makes the political dimension very important because the stakes are high in such a transformation. A lot of money is spent during the conversion.

And finally, there are three or four villages involved in the site. A very positive aspect is that the site is legal and there already is a miner's cooperative. Thus, the institutional foundation is very good, and there is a good spirit of tolerance and cooperation.

Very recently, a rich vein of gold was discovered a few kilometers away and now there's a mini gold rush underway, with miners coming from South Kalimantan and Java, and some miners leaving the current site for the new one.

We are anticipating differences in each location we work, and therefore we will be doing deep analysis of the context before we start implementing anything. That should all start in a month's time, so it will be a busy and exciting time for all of us. And we expect to learn a lot.

Bardolf Paul
Executive Director

Sharper vision, better mission



YTS Board of Directors Meeting in Rungan Sari, February 2016

Over the past 19 years of adjusting and shaping its approach and methodology, one might wonder if YTS has actually moved away from its original vision and mission. YTS Project Manager, Rini Murwahyuni, confirmed that this is not true. She stated that, if anything, the vision and mission is reflected even stronger now through the various activities we have been engaged with. "Although it seems not related, YTS projects actually complement each other with the underlying concept of building the capacity of all stakeholders to achieve good governance in all aspects" said Rini during her presentation on the Kahayan Project in the Board of Directors Meeting in January.

This statement was confirmed in the presentations of YTS activities in other projects. From livelihood support to mercury elimination, positive results had been achieved in each project despite struggles for funding.

Response from the Board was encouraging, and the rest of the meeting was spent discussing the strategy for 2016. Between the good news on the five-year national project in ASGM and the challenging financial situation for other projects, the Directors are optimistic that we can still carry on and remain consistent with our original vision and mission.

Another important note raised during the vision and mission discussion was the wish to focus more on indigenous issues in our activities. This makes a lot of sense, as our goal is to achieve good governance for the local and indigenous people in Central Kalimantan.

At the end of the half-day session, the Board members all agreed that it is time for YTS to promote its skills and capacity, in order to support emerging development trends and to position YTS strongly in the NGO network in Central Kalimantan.

ASGM Impact to the Forest & Environment

On March 30th, we went on a trip to an artisanal and small-scale gold mining site and gold shop in Galangan, Kereng Pangji, Central Kalimantan, accompanying a small team from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and the Blacksmith Institute. On the trip we met Sijo and his friends who have been working 20 days in a previously-mined pit in order to get roughly 2-3 grams of gold per day. The six immigrants came to the island from East Java as construction workers, but their boss ran away leaving them broke and jobless.

ASGM is a widespread activity that has contributed to deforestation and landscape change in the area. Cutting the trees to open areas for mining sites has left miles of exposed

sand and soil. Local miners consider Galangan an abandoned area because of the lack of gold, and now they are moving to new locations, which means other areas are vulnerable to the same threat.

Another threat is from mercury pollution in the mining sites, and also from burning the mercury-gold amalgam in the gold shop. Sijo's group use mercury to capture gold every day and are not aware of the health hazard, "We have not experienced any problem after using mercury all this time, it is safe" Sijo said. Fortunately, the owner of the gold shop in Kereng Pangji, Ida said "We were told from the beginning that we have to use the

waterbox condensor unit because it is dangerous for us to breathe the fumes. All of the gold shops here have installed this equipment."

Aside from the problems surrounding this sector, artisanal and small-scale gold mining provides an important source of income generation for people in the province. Real action is needed immediately to address the needs of the people for better livelihoods, and also to understand the impacts of ASGM on health and safety, as well as on the environment.



Two miners in the Galangan mining site, taking a break in the mining area that once was a vegetated land

Tribute to SA

When we first started working with the UNIDO Global Mercury Project in 2006, none of us could have predicted that it would eventually attract international interest and attention. Not even Sumali Agrawal, when he came to manage the project for YTS.

Success in the project, which led to our expanding involvement in the sector, is largely due to Sumali's capable hand, which at that time devised some innovative and simple technology to prevent the release of mercury into the environment.

In all of his work, Sumali showed a strong passion for environmental issues and was willing to go to great lengths to achieve measurable results. Coming from an environmental background himself, he brought new insights to the challenge of eliminating mercury from hotspots in Central Kalimantan, and to reducing mercury use in artisanal mining in general. Sumali was also concerned about the well-being of locals, and obtaining better health conditions for miners and their families.

Apart from his duty as Technical Director of YTS, Sumali also devoted time to sharing his knowledge, and helping staff to improve their English and writing skills. Through his technical and practical way of thinking, Sumali shared not only his knowledge, but also his life experience with his colleagues in YTS.

Today, after ten years of partnership, the results of his contributions remain in the institutional knowledge of YTS and among the wider range of people who now have much better knowledge about mercury. Our best wishes to Sumali for the future; we hope that his passion and good deeds will continue.



Sumali Agrawal, supporting sustainable development through his passion for environmental and health protection

Gunung Mas Government commits for Sustainable Good Governance

“Short but meaningful” - this is an expression to describe the Governance Project sustainability strategy workshop in Kuala Kurun, on April 12. About 36 government officials from Gunung Mas participated in this event, including the Regent, Arton S. Dohong.

The workshop was hosted by YTS and the Gunung Mas Planning Board, and aimed at discussing all of the achievements that were accomplished during the lifetime of the project by sharing the impact evaluation results, and by asking participants to provide inputs for a sustainability strategy that would enable project achievements and initiatives to continue.

In his speech, the Regent expressed his wish for the project to continue in order to improve governance conditions in the district. “If possible this project should not only contain a few programs, but instead there should be hundreds of programs, as they are really useful for improving human resources within government institutions in Gunung Mas”, he stated enthusiastically.

The regent also said: “YTS should not leave Gunung Mas District. We will continue improving our governance quality by providing a special budget for various kinds of capacity building based on YTS’s recommendations”.

At the end of the event, YTS awarded appreciation certificates to government staff from various agencies. The District Development Planning Board (Bappeda), the Fishery and Animal Husbandry Agency, and the Secretariat of the Government Office received awards as institutions with the best participation and responsiveness. Three Bappeda staff, Ricky Yulanda, Aprianto and Yemmi Fathurahman received awards for having



YTS Director, Bardolf Paul (far left), and Gunung Mas Regent, Arton S. Dohong (second from left), hand over the awards to government agencies that have been actively involved with the Governance Project in the past four years

the most responsive organizing committees. Awards were also given to seven staff from various agencies who demonstrated good participation and progress, as a result of the governance project.

Dian Anggraeni, the Governance Project Coordinator, feels satisfied with the commitment from District Government for sustaining their commitment to good governance. She said that after Governance Project Phase II ends, the government will allocate a special budget for improving governance capacity based on YTS recommendations. “However, the challenge is still about finding community organizer champions who could promote good governance in their local area and be critical partners of government”. She expects that the Governance Project Phase III will be approved and will continue.

Gunung Mas Regent demands a well-prepared District Development Plan



Arton delivers his speech in Gumas Musrenbang

To have a Regent present throughout the entire agenda of Musrenbang is a rare opportunity, but Arton S. Dohong, the Regent of Gunung Mas changed this perception as he attended the Musrenbang in his District. “I need to stay until the end of the event because I want us to focus on our district development program. I don’t

want to be blamed for the results later. And, every civil servant has the responsibility to formulate a good development plan for Gunung Mas. The Subdistrict Indicative Budget Ceiling is still normative. The plan should be properly developed to avoid revising at the last minute because it will ruin the District Budget (APBD)” said Arton in his opening speech.

Following that, discussions went smoothly and there was an

interesting dynamic facilitated by Dian Anggraeni from YTS, in which each government agency presented its program and available budgets. Dian informed us that the results from a survey YTS conducted in the village suggested that 80% of those taking part in the Subdistrict Musrenbang felt satisfied with the Musrenbang process and results. They expect government, the legislature, and all parties implementing the planning and budgeting system to act as good role models. Implementation of the Subdistrict Musrenbang followed District Regulation No. 10/2015 that we helped advocate.

The Regent demonstrated his sound knowledge of what is going on in his jurisdiction by pointing out critical development issues that each agency needs to address and include in their program. For instance, he raised the clean water issue for the Public Works Department to address, and reminded the Education Department to re-activate the 12-year mandatory school program. No agencies were excluded from his comments, bringing meaningful results to the day-long meeting.

YTS bids a Final Farewell to its Founding Father

“Patience and fortitude will keep you strong in your mourning, for he has gone to the heavenly home”. This lyric was sung as we bid our final farewell to Sumbin Gaman, 98, Wednesday 20th April.

To talk about the history of YTS means to talk about Sumbin Gaman, and the story of his relationship with Mansur Geiger back in 1979, in the deep jungle within the heart of Borneo. Sumbin at that time was 61 when he first met Mansur on his exploration trip, and since then they made a strong father-son bonding. “I can’t say enough about how kind Bue (granpa) Sumbin has been to me at the time, a foreigner deep in the Dayak jungle. I was amazed at his spirit, his attitude. Such an old man who never stopped working and contributing to the life of his family and community” said Mansur in his speech. Mansur continued later that from this relationship he learned many things about Dayak culture, and shared the same dream with Sumbin of a better life for the Dayak community.

It therefore made sense when in 1997 they agreed to formalize the good community relationship with an organization, picking the name Yayasan Tambuhak Sinta. Chosen by Sumbin himself, the name Tambuhak Sinta was taken from the Dayak words which mean “Rope of Love”, with the intention that the organization would bring together all the community and stakeholders, regardless of their origin, for a better life on a foundation of love.



YTS & KSK together with families and relatives send prayers and pay last respects to the deceased Sumbin Gaman, one of the founders of YTS

Over the years, Sumbin has always provided advice to the organization, and never stop telling his dream, that someday when the remote areas are developed, the people can keep up with it, and not be against it. “Our father said, his dream is to see a great development here in Central Kalimantan, and everyone benefits from it” said Esum, one of Sumbin’s sons, during the funeral.

With the song that we keep singing in our heart, may your journey to the heavenly home be peaceful, and may your dream live forever in our hearts. Good bye, Bue Sumbin.

News Flash

Multi Stakeholder Forum

YTS attended a Multi Stakeholder Forum in Rungan Sari 5-6 January 2016. The forum was formed because of USAID IFACS. The meeting follows the initiative from the former USAID IFACS project, discussing strategic issues that NGOs in Palangka Raya can work together with.

ASGM IT Training

To prepare for the national-scale five year ASGM project, YTS sent two staff to an ASGM IT Training in Bogor. The two staff joined the three-day training with APRI representatives from across Indonesia, learning the use of PDFMaps and FLSMS software to map and record ASGM activities and progress in remote areas. Results from this training were shared in the YTS office, together with some staff from the provincial Mining and Health departments, as well as a representative from fellow NGO, APRI.

EPSP Program

YTS gratefully received a scholarship for the Executive Program for Sustainable Partnership (EPSP), a collaboration program between Community-Company Partnerships for Health in Indonesia (CCPHI) and the University of Paramadina, funded by Ford Foundation. Using Good Governance, Shared Value and Sustainability as its platforms, it aims to produce executives who are able to build trust between the sectors for effective partnership, to facilitate the needs of partnership in social, economy, and cultural contexts, also to develop, implement, and evaluate the sustainable partnership through lessons learned and an evidence-based approach. The participants came from business, government, and CSOs. Inspired figures, academicians, and practitioners from different sectors are involved as resource persons, among these are Emil Salim, Erma Witoelar, and Suyoto.

Agenda

May

Governance & Kahayan Project:

Sharing session: Village Regulation

Bukit Batu:

KUB Legal Registration

AGC-YTS:

Visit from GAC

Annual Planning

Sharing session: Minamata Convention

June

Governance & Kahayan Project

Introduction to BUMDesa

Technical assistance: village fund management

Sharing session: village governance & structure

Monitoring livelihood activities

Bukit Batu

Monitoring fish cultivation

Fish Cultivation Training Center establishment

KUB Legal Registration

Meeting with Bappeda Palangka Raya

AGC-YTS

Scoping Visit & Baseline Study Preparation

Training needs assessment in Parenggean

Staff training: gender and health

First PSC coordination meeting

Support for CIRDI research project

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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