



FOREST DEPARTMENT SARAWAK



**INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER ORGANIZATION
(ITTO)**

FIELD REPORT
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PROJECT BRIEFING FOR
PD 902/19 – rev.3 (F)
AND
PP-A/59-352

24 May 2024

Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

Field Report on “Meet and Greet Session at Long Semiyang, Upper Baram

The “Meet and Greet” session was organized on the 26th of September 2023 in conjunction with the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting, which was held on the 25th of September 2023 at Pullman Hotel, Miri. The objectives of the “Meet and Greet” session were to familiarise the PSC delegates with the UBFA community's issues and local situations and, at the same time, to provide opportunities for the local communities to voice their concerns and doubts about the two ITTO-Funded projects, especially on the project design and concept.

The session was attended by PSC members and various stakeholders, including local communities of UBFA. The full list is attached. During the session, the ITTO Executive Director, Miss Sheam SATKURU and Dato’ Zailani Bin Haji Hashim gave their opening remark, followed by a presentation from Miss Wilhelmina Cluny sharing the PSC meeting outcome. The project briefing for the two ITTO-funded projects was done by Mdm. Evelyn Jugi. Mr Komeo Joe from KERUAN (Penan Association), Mr Peter Kalang from Save Rivers and Mr Baptise from BMF also commented on the UBFA projects. The program is attached.

The session ended with a question-and-answer session. In conclusion, the UBFA local communities gained a better understanding of the project design and concept. Attachment 1 contains the remarks, presentations, and question-and-answer sessions.

TRANSCRIPTION OF “MEET AND GREET” AT LONG SEMIYANG, UPPER BARAM (27 SEPTEMBER 2023)

Presentation/Speech:

1. **Miss Sheam SATKURU, Executive Director of ITTO**, said that she was delighted to be able to come to Long Semiyang and experience the situation on the ground and meet UBFA's local communities. After all, it's not every time the Executive Director of ITTO attends a PSC meeting and joint meet and greet session like this. She stated that local communities, with the support of the Forest Department Sarawak and various partners, including ITTO, need to understand better the objectives and expected outcomes of the two ITTO projects, which will benefit all communities within the UBFA. She emphasised the spirit of cooperation among various partners and stakeholders to achieve sustainable development in UBFA.
2. Datuk Zailani from the Ministry of Plantation and Commodities expressed his gratitude for being able to join the “meet and greet session. He said that the two projects are good projects and that the local communities should use the opportunities given to them. He also said that every partner should give their full cooperation to implement the project successfully.
3. **Baptiste from Bruno Manser Fonds (BMF)** recalled the project background where it began in 2009, which was called Penan Peace Park (PPP) at the time, and then eventually improved and changed to Upper Baram Forest Area (UBFA). He mentioned the importance of the project, the opportunities towards a new participation approach to the communities involved, and the objective to promote sustainable development in the Upper Baram area under the lead of Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) and the framework of International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). The project aimed for a balance between community needs and forest protection. He reiterated the support from BMF to all stakeholders willing to make positive changes through this UBFA project. He hoped for a strong and important output from the project, such as community empowerment and protection of the core zones that serve the purpose of the communities around. He then remarked that BMF is convinced this project will succeed not just for the local communities but also for Sarawak and Malaysia.
4. **Peter Kallang of SAVE Rivers** introduced the project history from when it was originally initiated as PPP until the presently known UBFA. He recalled the efforts of SAVE Rivers in meeting with the late Chief Minister of Sarawak, Pehin Sri Tan Sri Adenan bin Haji Satem who gave his full support for the project and wished for expansion to include other races from the Upper Baram area like the Kenyah, Kelabit, and Saban. He then hoped for support from all the villages and the

communities involved to cooperate for the project's success, as there is a limited timeframe for the project duration. He then told the audience that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Sarawak have always been perceived as opposing the government, but the NGOs are protecting the communities' rights, especially the indigenous people, as well as protecting the environment. Some companies neglect that their businesses are damaging the environment and violating human rights, which NGOs are protecting from.

5. **Komeok Joe of the Keruan Organisation** presented his speech with the history of PPP and the efforts of Keruan in protecting Penan's rights, including creating maps of Penan villages throughout Sarawak. He also mentioned a few projects the Keruan organisation did for various Penan villages in Sarawak.
6. **Evelyn Jugi of Forest Department Sarawak** began her speech by emphasising that communities should fully understand what the UBFA project is for. She then presented about UBFA and reminded the community that the project has no physical boundaries, as some believed. The objective of the trip to Long Semiyang was to give awareness to communities involved regarding UBFA and manage their expectation realistic to the project scope. She then proceeded to present the project chronology, including the budget allocated for both ITTO-funded projects, which was USD556k for managing UBFA and USD258k for community empowerment in forest management in Upper Baram. 99% of the funding will be used for community development, such as training, visits, workshops, and some minor improvement works.

As funding has just been received from ITTO, the project officially began on September 1st 2023, and the first Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting was held yesterday (26 September 2023) to discuss the two projects. The project duration for managing the UBFA project will be two years and will be managed by Miss Wilhelmina Cluny. Most activities will be research and studies within the UBFA during the first year. Mdm. Evelyn manages the other complementary project herself, and the implementation duration is only one year, until September 2024. The project headed by Evelyn will mostly be the development of infrastructures in UBFA, as needed and requested by communities, and must be within the budget allocated. FDS will cooperate with various parties to implement small projects as the project area is huge, and the budget is limited to cater to all 32 villages.

She reiterated that the UBFA project will not change the land status of the area, and the status of gazette areas will stay as it is. As an executing agency, FDS will implement the project according to laws and guidelines for the best solution for all and through open discussions with various parties. FDS has its own policy in environmental protection to create sustainable development and achieve balance

for the benefit of the communities. She then remarked that this UBFA project could be a model or a replication of other areas for protection if the project is successful. She hoped we would find a solution along with the timber companies and communities involved. She has also explained the UBFA maps to the audience and stated that studies and research will be conducted within the huge areas of core zones. Within FDS, the ITTO project is managed by the International Affairs Division, with the Director of Forests as the Project Coordinator and other accounting and administrative staff.

In conclusion, she expressed her hope that the project will result in guidelines for the consultation process that suit the community's needs under forest management in line with Free, prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). Most importantly, FDS will help to improve the livelihood of communities within UBFA through future programs and activities conducted under these ITTO-funded projects.

7. **Wilhelmina Cluny of Forest Department Sarawak** shared the outcome of the 1st PSC meeting held yesterday with the audience, mentioning the attendees were roughly 60 people. The agenda discussed during the meeting was the operation plan for the project's first year, which will consist mostly of research and studies, as well as community consultations. She said there were two things finalized at the end of the PSC Meeting: 1) the operation plan for activities to be conducted in the first year and 2) the official start date for the project, which is 1 September 2023. She also relayed an important message from the meeting chairperson: the cooperation needed from all stakeholders of the project to ensure the success of this UBFA project.

Q&A session:

8. Q: Leroy Lingin (Long Lamai)

I don't really understand the project. I used to understand that once the UBFA project is done, UBFA is there. What will happen after two years of the project?

A: Wilhelmina (FDS)

As mentioned and presented by Evelyn before, this UBFA project is not something physical. So, after two years, one of the project's outcomes is to develop a management plan to manage the area better. Funding will then be required for the continuous implementation of the project. We, FDS, will try our best to come up with a management plan within two years of the project. We will also share the outcome of our research and studies with the communities.

9. Q: Ipa Ulai (Sawa Ali)

I agree with the project and am hopeful for FDS. Penan needs to understand the UBFA project more, such as the activities to be conducted within our areas. The Penan do not know what research or studies are, so please let us know what they are about and ensure we benefit from them. For example, it is the study of medicinal plants. Also, may I know if we can request assistance to fix our houses using the funds?

A: Wilhelmina (FDS)

For more understanding of the project, the FDS team will explain it to the villages. But for now, I will also explain that the PPP project proposal was previously submitted to our late chief minister. The late Tan Sri Adenan Satem said to include other races in the areas, not just the Penan, and therefore, the name was changed to UBFA. As for the research and studies, we know UBFA has vast forested areas, so we want to know the importance of the forest and its usage to the communities, along with the uniqueness of the forest that no other place has. This information will help us to plan for better management of the area. For example, Batu Siman has lots of tourists who are attracted to it. So, we want to know what the area has, like the animals, herbs or medicinal plants. It is important to include this in the study or plan for conservation and ecotourism, which then, in turn, will help to improve the income of its surrounding communities.

We also want to know the forest resources used by communities, and we need to work together to find solutions to manage the area better. As for funding assistance to fix houses, we will need official applications from the communities. Within UBFA, there are 32 villages, so we will have to sort and prioritize the projects that need to be done, as the budget is limited to cater to all villages.

10. Q: a local from Long Selawan

Based on the presentation, cooperation from all communities is what we need to manage the UBFA. From my understanding, the communities in Upper Baram are already experts in managing and protecting the area. Their efforts are what initiated the PPP and what is presently known as UBFA. The communities need the government to cooperate with them in managing and protecting the area from timber companies, especially. Do not simply give or renew their licenses because the timber companies are what contributed to the damaged environment here in UBFA.

A: Wilhelmina (FDS)

I agree that the communities in UBFA are already experts in managing and protecting the area, but the government has laws and policies that we need to abide by. We need to balance the conservation efforts with our economic resources. I agree that gaps exist between the government, the timber companies, and the local communities. This is why most of the activities planned are to study the resources needed to be conserved by the communities. Therefore, we need all parties to cooperate, including the timber companies, through various meetings and discussions that will be held within the two years of the project.

A: Evelyn (FDS)

We need cooperation in executing and implementing the project. This also means that whatever issues arise, we will find the solution together through open discussion at the round table.

11. Q: Peter (Long Semiyang)

How do we discuss and achieve a consensus when some villages are absent? Have you guys discussed the project with communities within the UBFA? What are the boundaries between the villages?

12.Q: Jerry (Long Semiyang)

We always complain to Samling, but because their manager keeps changing, our issues are ignored, and we get no action. The problem with the communities here is the inefficiency of our headmen, who refuse to voice our issues. Some of the headmen lack understanding of English or even the Malay language, which creates a barrier in communication with outsiders, affecting the villagers as their messages and issues cannot be relayed to the government.

A: Evelyn (FDS)

The question or comment is outside our jurisdiction or the project's scope, so we cannot answer it for you. But the question is relevant; it's just outside the UBFA project, which has clear objectives and scopes.

13.Q: James (Long Tungan)

Previously, when Samling had their operation near Long Tungan, we could relay our complaint to them whenever the road to our village was damaged and needed maintenance, and they would come and fix it. But, since Samling is no longer operating in the area, the damaged road in our area is not maintained. Will it be possible for me to request maintenance to fix the road as soon as possible? The road will be completely broken and damaged if not fixed soon, within two or three months.

A: Wilhelmina (FDS)

Samling has a policy that prohibits them from entering and operating an area that is not their current coupe; therefore, Samling going to the village to fix the road is probably too far for them. So, I suggest you direct your request or complaint to Samling itself because for us to do so is out of our project jurisdiction.

“MEET AND GREET” PROGRAM

Date and time : Monday, 25 September 2023

Time : 7:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.

Venue : Long Semiyang, Upper Baram

Date/Time	Subjects
26/9/2023 (8:00 a.m.)	Travel from Miri to Long Semiyang
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting point at Pullman Hotel latest by 7.30 a.m.• Expected time of arrival: 5.00 p.m.• Overnight at Long Semiyang (Secretariat will arrange with the Ketua Kampung)
26/9/2023 (6.30 p.m.)	Dinner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At the Longhouse
26/9/2023 (7.30 -10.30 p.m.)	Meet and Greet Session
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome remarks by MC• Introduction of the delegates• Opening remarks by Ketua Kampung• Opening remarks by MPC• Opening remarks by ITTO• Opening remarks by Donor (BMF)• Briefing of ITTO-Funded projects by Miss Evelyn Jugi• Sharing of meeting outcome by Miss Wilhelmina Cluny• Question and Answer
27/9/203 10.30 p.m.	Question and Answer Session
10.30	Closing
27/9/2023 (7.00 am)	Breakfast
27/9/2023 (8.00 am)	Travel to Miri

ATTACHMENT 3 “MEET AND GREET” ATTENDANCE LIST

NO.	NAME	DESIGNATION	AGENCY
Forest Department Sarawak			
1	Miss Evelyn Jugi	Project Leader PD-A/59-352)	FDS
2	Miss Wilhelmina Cluny	Researcher (Project Leader (PD902/19 Rev.3(F)	FDS
3	Miss Santey Berikom	Executive Forester	FDS
4	Mr. Silvester Jemat	Executive Forester	FDS
5	Miss Angelia Muri	Penolong Pegawai Tadbir	FDS
6	Mr. Sarzali Sarhamat	Project Accountant	FDS
7	Christina Peter	Officer	FDS
8	Kleansmann ak Diser	Officer	FDS
9	Jonathan Andum	Officer	FDS
10	Adrian Jong	Officer	FDS
11	Peter Sigam	Officer	FDS
12	Bailey Rapo	Officer	FDS
13	Brain Berni	Officer	FDS
14	Cedric Paul	Officer	FDS
STATE AGENCIES			
15	Anthony Asoi	Superintendent	Land and Survey
16	Melissa Labut	Admin Officer	Miri Resident Office
17	Mr. Josephson Louis	Officer	Economic Planning Unit
18	Mr. Samuel Belawan	Regional Director	HDA
EXTERNAL AGENCIES/ORGANISATION/NGOS			
11	YBhg. Dato' Zailani Bin Haji Hashim	Deputy Secretary General	Ministry of Plantation and Commodities
12	Mr. Wan Ahmad Asmady Bin Wan Md Din	Senior Undersecretary	Ministry of Plantation and Commodities
13	Puan Eirna Yani binti Mohd Arip,	Senior Principal Assistant Secretary	Ministry of Plantation and Commodities

14	Miss Sheam Satkuru	Executive Director	International Tropical Timber Organisation
15	Dr. Hwan-Ok Ma	Officer in Charge, Forest Management	International Tropical Timber Organisation
16	Miss Annie Ting	Chief Executive Officer	Sarawak Timber Association
17	Dr. Annina Aeberli	Project Director	Bruno Manser Fonds
18	Mr. Baptiste Laville	Project Director	Bruno Manser Fonds
19	Mr. Peter kalang	Chairman Save River	Save River
20	Miss Celine Lim	Chief Executive Officer	Save River

LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND ASSOCIATION			
21	Douglas Tirong	Ketua Kampung	Long Kerong
22	Bian Belare	Ketua Kampung	Long Lamai
23	Romeo Pusa	Ketua Kampung	Long Sabai
24	Uloi Tinggang	Ketua Kampung	Long Moh
25	John Lajo	Ketua Kampung	Long Sepigen
26	Komeok Joe	Coordinator	Keruan
27	Elizabeth Ballang	Participant	Keruan
28	Dayang Ukau	Participant	Keruan
29	Nick Kelesau	Participant	Keruan
30	James Bujang	Coordinator	Keruan
31	Simpson Njock	Participant	Long Moh
32	Heaculis Musa	Participant	Ba Jawi
33	Sia Ngedau	Participant	Long Kerong
34	Stanly Petrus	Participant	Ba Lai
35	Long Moh	5 representatives from each village	
36	Long Sela'an		
37	Long Semiyang		
38	Long Tungan		
39	Long Siut		
40	Lio Mato		
41	Long Segah		
42	Long Sepigen		
43	Long Kerong		
44	Long Sait		
45	Long Murung		
46	Long Ajeng		
47	Long Lamam		
48	Long Mubui		

PHOTOS TAKEN DURING THE “MEET AND GREET” SESSION

Photos by: Aldrin Jong (FDS)



Miss Sheam delivered her opening remarks



Project multi-stakeholders group photos



Question and answer session



Youngest UBFA participant



Registration in Progress



Journey to long Semiyang



FIELD REPORT ON PROJECT BRIEFING AND AWARENESS PROGRAM ON SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT, FOREST MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND FOREST CONSERVATION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The UBFA's project area encompasses 283,500 hectares and consists of 32 local communities: twenty-two Penan villages, eight Kenyah, three Kelabit, and one Saban. Geographically, these villages are situated along the Baram River, and some are located along its tributaries, namely Selaan, Selungo, Balong, and Puak river.

The UBFA project was the most highlighted project both internationally and locally, especially by NGOs, even before its official launch on September 1, 2023. There are many interpretations and perceptions of the project design and concept from the local communities within the project area, one of which is that UBFA is a conservation project. Therefore, it is critical to explain to the local communities what has been approved in the project document, especially on the objectives and expected outputs of the projects.

The UBFA project area consists of multiple land uses, including active logging areas. It is well known that logging activities have created many misunderstandings and animosity among the local communities, especially the Penan. However, with the enactment of the policy on forest management certification in 2019 making it mandatory for all long-term forest timber licenses to obtain certification and with the support of relevant guidelines, there is a huge difference in managing the forest.

The output of Activity 1 of this project is to create awareness among the UBFA local communities on the forest management policy, the concept of sustainable forest management, the multi-stakeholder consultation framework and forest conservation. The field activity also includes a briefing on the two ITTO-funded projects and consultation with each village to ascertain their immediate needs.

2.0 SUMMARY OF PROJECT BRIEFING AND AWARENESS PROGRAM PRESENTATIONS

2.1 Project Briefing

The UBFA local communities were briefed on the chronology of the UBFA project, emphasizing that it is not only for the Penan communities but also includes all 32 villages stated in the approved project document. They were informed that the project area or the UBFA project area gazettelement does not have a physical boundary. The project implementation would not affect the existing land use, nor would it change the current status of the land. If the project is successfully implemented, the project will

benefit the local communities in UBFA; however, full cooperation and support are required from every stakeholder.

2.2 Awareness of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) /Forest Management Certification (FMC)/ Multi-stakeholder Consultation Framework

The awareness program topics were sustainable forest management, forest management certification, a multistakeholder framework, and the constitution of permanent forests, including an explanation of conservation.

Logging operations have long been contentious issues for local communities in Upper Baram and are heavily felt in the UBFA project area. In the past and up to when the awareness program was conducted, the local community's knowledge of SFM and FMC, was almost negligent, especially the Penan. Prior to the UBFA project, the Penan, especially along the Akah River, has always been unreachable except by the NGOs. Notably, they have been willing to participate in the awareness program, have responded well to the project and are willing to listen to something related to logging.

It was highlighted to them that logging operations and forest management have moved towards better systems that are more environmentally responsible and socially beneficial while still considering revenue from timber production. This is ensured by implementing the FMC, which the government has made mandatory for all long-term forest timber licenses to obtain so they can continue to operate. It was also explained to them that under the FMC framework, the local communities have a proper and systematic platform for them to express or convey their grievances and where they have a voice related to matters affecting their livelihood and rights.

3.0 CONSULTATION ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the project briefing and awareness program, the team consulted each local community on its most urgent needs. As expected, we have a wish list for every village, from sanitary systems, gravity-feed water, and house repairs to bridges and roads. They were informed that the project has limited funds; nevertheless, through the UBFA project initiative, we will try to find other funding sources, but they have to keep in mind that it will not happen immediately.

4.0 CONCLUSION

To conclude, this activity has achieved its objective of informing every village in the UBFA project area about the project background and progress, increasing their awareness about SFM and FMC from the right sources, and gathering relevant information required for planning community development activities. Another positive progress the project has obtained was intangible output, such as building rapport and familiarity with the UBFA local communities, particularly with those villages that have always been close-knit.

It is also imperative to note that carrying out any activities in the UBFA is a huge challenge because all the villages are located mostly in the interior of Sarawak, where road access is very limited. Therefore, accessibility is a major issue, and transportation is overly expensive. This has resulted in a limited number of activities for community development, not to mention that the villages are scattered over such a large area.

Attachment 1: Photos of the Activity: Photo Credit – Angelia Muri

Project Briefing and Awareness Program – Group 1



Long Siut/Long Sait/Long Kerong/Long Sepigen



Long Moh



Long Murung/Long Ajeng/Long Lamam/Long Muboi/
Ba Sebateu/Sawa Ali/Data Bila



Lio Mato



Long Tungan

Project Briefing and Awareness Program – Group 2



Long Lelang A and B



Long Benali (Centre)
LongKepang
Long Main
Ba Keramue
Long Sabai
Pengeran Iman
Pengeran Kelian



Consultation with
ketua-ketua
kampung and their
“advisors.”

Project Briefing and Awareness Program – Group 3



Long Banga



Long Lamai



Attachment 2: Program Schedule

Date	Time	Venue	Village
Cluster 1 (27/10/23 – 31/10/23)			
27/10/2023	1.00 p.m	Kampung Long Siut	Long Siut Long Sepigen Long Kerong Long Sait
28/10/2023	10.00 a.m	Kampung Lio Mato	Lio Mato
	2.00 p.m	Kampung Long Tungan	Long Tungan
29/10/2023	10.00 a.m	Kampung Long Moh	Long Moh
	2.00 p.m	Kampung Long Selaan	Long Selaan
31/10/2023	1.00 p.m	Segah-Selaan Homestay	Long Murung Long Lamam Long Ajeng Ba Sebateu Ba Data Bila Ba Muboi Long Segah
Cluster 2 (24/11/23 – 25/11/23)			
24/11/2023	2.00 p.m	Kampung Long Lelang	Long Lelang A Long Lelang B
25/11/2023	10.00 a.m	Kampung Long Benali	Long Benali Long Main Long Kepang Ba Kerameu Long Sabai Ba Pengaran Kelian Ba Pengaran Iman
Cluster 3 (14/12/24 – 15/12/23)			
14/12/2023	10.00 a.m	Kampung Long Banga	Long Banga Long Puak Long Peluan Long Beruang
15/12/2023	10.00 a.m	Kampung Long Lamai	Long Lamai Ba Lai Ba Jawi