



# One People

SGP The GEF  
Small Grants  
Programme



# Nature's partners for sustainable future



## Sabah's indigenous communities make conservation sense



COMMUNITY EFFORT...a weekly local community food and drinks stall at the Pacos Trust project site at Kg Terian

**HUMAN** development is much more than the expansion of socio-economic income and wealth. Its focus must be people, and how they can conserve and sustainably use their environment, natural resources and ecosystems for sustainable livelihoods.

The Partners of Community Organisations (PACOS) Trust believes in putting this policy into practise.

PACOS, a community-based organisation (CBO) in Sabah, strives to ensure that the local communities with whom they work are adequately empowered to pursue sustainable livelihoods through income generation activities, thereby improving their welfare and well-being.

At the same time, these activities protect and promote their environment and biodiversity.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP) plays a significant role in supporting PACOS through funding projects aimed at empowering local communities to find their own solutions to local challenges, particularly in the areas of biodiversity and climate change.

This GEF/SGP project is being implemented in many sites across Sabah including Sinungkalangan/Bambangan, Podos, Balat, Kuamat Gana, Kipouvo, Nampasan and Terian

PACOS places strong emphasis on shared local ownership of the project, thus there is significant participation of local communities, including the Dusun, Dusun Liwan, Dusun Sonsogon, Sungai and Kadazan.

The primary focus of this project revolves around building and strengthening the capacity of the local communities in fostering win-win situations where both socio-economic and environmental benefits are achieved.

Avenues for capacity building include hand-on training workshops of community leaders, training of trainers, community consultations and facilitating field visits.

Communities are also trained in project management, accounting and project monitoring and evaluation.

Having acquired the necessary skills, the communities are empowered to undertake a number of sustainable livelihood activities such as ecotourism, agrotourism, cultivation of medicinal herbs and plants, production and sale of handicrafts, gravity water systems and propagation of traditional knowledge, wisdom and culture.

For instance, with the support of PACOS the local community established a community owned rice milling machine which is shared by all farmers instead of each farmer having his own machine.

This way, the community optimise their time, cost, and human effort as well as reduce the use of fossil fuel of running machines which would contribute to climate change. At the next stage, plans are underway to run the rice milling machine using solar power, making it even more environment-friendly.

Likewise, local communities are also discouraged from harvesting timber products or wildlife indiscriminately for fuel or income. Instead, they are encourage to conserve and sustainably use their biodiversity.

This GEF/SGP project has benefited local communities in numerous ways. Due to increased income they are better able to play meaningful roles in the development of their own villages - such as building the infrastructure for community interaction and for



SHARED MILLING...a shared, community-owned and operated rice-milling machine installed by PACOS at its project site at Kg Terian.

transportation.

More children get to go to school, and people have access to better nutrition and healthcare facilities.

If replicated in time and space, GEF/SGP projects would promote more and more communities to become self-reliant and successful in practising sustainable livelihoods by contributing towards socio-economic and environmental benefits.

### Traditional knowledge base

**TRADITIONAL** Medicinal/Heritage Gardens (TM/HGs) have already been established by PACOS Trust in Kipouvo, Kuamat, Terian and Podos. The focus is on ensuring that the younger generation appreciate the Traditional Medicine/Heritage Gardens by learning from their elders the healing properties and the medicinal uses of the medicinal herbs and plants found in their respective gardens. This will be tailored to meet the needs of the villagers and taught by the elders as the holders of traditional knowledge and wisdom. Other activities include the processing of medicinal herbs and plants, practising conservation and sustainable use methods and increasing diversity of the medicinal plants and herbs.

### Watershed management

**IN 2001**, using GEP/SGP project grants, PACOS provided funds to the villagers of Balat to contribute towards building a water gravity supply system, besides encouraging the communities of Balat and Terian to map out the watershed catchment areas, which would then also be incorporated into the management plans for the conservation and sustainable use of the environment, natural resources and ecosystems.

Nurseries were established in two areas, Podos and Kipouvo, to carry out enrichment planting in the watershed catchment area.

The species of trees to be planted must be considered carefully, in order to increase the diversity of tree species in the area and support wildlife needs.

In all its work, PACOS discovered that the sustainable use of diversity always coincides with the socio-economic needs of the local communities to be truly successful and sustainable.

### Question time

- 1) PACOS Trust aims to promote sustainable \_\_\_\_\_ among local communities in Sabah as a means of conserving and sustainably using genetic resources and the biodiversity in their area.
- 2) Community members are encouraged to maintain and protect the natural resources in project areas through the establishment of \_\_\_\_\_ medicine gardens, ecotourism and agrotourism.
- 3) The predominant source of farming in the village of Kipouvo is \_\_\_\_\_ farming and the farmers supplement their income by tapping rubber.

Answers:  
1) livelihoods  
2) traditional  
3) subsistence

### MORE ON THE NET



- [www.sabah.net.my/pacos](http://www.sabah.net.my/pacos)
- <http://www.sgp.undp.org>
- <http://habitat.igc.org.agenda21/a21.htm>

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