

K a b a r I t a h



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Editorial

While attending a conference on community mining recently, I was struck by the heavy focus on technical and legal issues, and very little attention to social issues. This is somewhat surprising because with the technical in particular, although it's not completely simple, solutions are fairly straightforward.

Regarding the legal question, apart from the licensing arrangement, for which measures already exists, there are issues related to jurisdiction and overall management of the sector. Quite a lot of discussion centred on which arm of government should be responsible. Some thought it should be the Environment Ministry; others suggested that as it was mining it should fall under the mandate of the Mines Ministry.

But it all depends on how you look at it: as one speaker pointed out, this activity has been going on for centuries and has been considered simply another valid form of livelihood. So perhaps that would be a better way to approach overall management of the sector, more from a socio-economic perspective rather than a technical one.

Certainly our experience shows that one of the most challenging aspects is how best to engage with mining communities. Each community is different and they are not like regular settlement-based communities – there is no overarching legal governance structure such as the village government, which falls under the national governance system. And often there is a large turnover of people from year to year. So they're not very stable.

In reality there is a very large variation between individual mining communities. The numbers can vary enormously: from a handful of local miners to thousands in very large sites. Some are closely linked to villages and others are separate unto themselves. And depending where they are in Indonesia, they are affected by local cultural norms and the attitude of local government, which can be very supportive or extremely repressive.

It is good to see this sector in the spotlight in a positive way, but we are in the early stages of understanding how best to engage with and support the hundreds of thousands of people involved .

Bardolf Paul
Executive Director

Ginto Usop: A Long Path to Transparency



Ginto Usop (far right), the Head of Mangkuhung, is willing to take an unusual approach in order to be transparent and accountable with the villagers when dealing with the Village Fund

From outside, the effect of the new Village Law on development in Mangkuhung may look like that of the other villages along the Miri River. But peering deeper into the process, this village tells a different story that may inspire others.

While it gives hope for a higher level of autonomy and authority to the villages, implementation of this new Law has its own challenges at community level. To name one: village government requires sufficient administration skills, and this varies from one village to another. Sufficient skill is not the only issue. As villages are now entering the second phase of the Dana Desa (Village Fund) disbursement, already many villages have reported difficulties in reporting on the use of the fund, and the risk of corruption and unaccountability is now higher.

Ginto Usop, the Head of Mangkuhung Village since 2011, tells us how his village made a difference. Ginto explained that generally, their village is not at all free from obstacles. Transparency is not something natural. But he decided to take a huge step by bringing together all villagers to discuss the use of the Dana Desa for their village development, and made the financial report available for everyone to see by posting it on the public information kiosk.

Ginto admitted that this was not easy. During the first phase of disbursing the Dana Desa, he was already overwhelmed. Managing the fund is one thing, but the most challenging part was to get what was in the village

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ACC-YTS Technical Training



The YTS ASGM Team had an intensive series of training and knowledge sharing during the full week visit to the field and to the YTS office by two AGC technical experts, Ricardo Rossing and Sixto Aguero

In mid August, YTS welcomed Ricardo Rossing and Sixto Aguero, two technical experts from AGC (Artisanal Gold Council), our Canadian partner for the project titled 'Sustainability

Development of the ASGM in Indonesia'. Their visit was aimed to assist YTS in assessing technical requirements for implementing project activities. Supriyanto, the AGC Assistant Project Manager from Jakarta, also joined them to monitor the progress of project preparation. Together with the AGC team, we conducted exploratory surveys to four mining sites in Mt. Muro and one site in Parenggean, collecting information needed for project site selection. We also received a basic training on 'Particle Size Analysis and Screening', as well as learning more about inventory measurement techniques. Those two weeks were a noteworthy experience for YTS, and we believe for AGC too. It was an essential part of this partnership, particularly in integrating the technical side and ground reality in the field. We look forward to gaining more knowledge from AGC in environment, health and gender issues, which are other important aspects of implementing this project.

Networking

SDIA's Fundraising for Fish Farmer Training in Central Kalimantan

As a member of the Susila Dharma International Association (SDIA) network, the YTS project titled 'Training for Fish Farmers in Kalimantan' is featured on the SDIA web page. This particular project aims to strengthen a high-quality hatchery for breeding and raising fish fry and fingerlings in Palangka Raya. The facility then will serve as a training center for fish farmers in Bukit Batu and Palangka Raya to gain the necessary skills to improve their livelihoods. Please visit <https://www.susiladharm.org/?project-need=training-for-fish-farmers-in-kalimantan> for more details about the project and how you can support our fish farmers to achieve their dream!

GIN Kalimantan Expo

Over 300 young international and domestic students joined the Global Issues Network conference that took place over three days in Rungan Sari, 15 – 17 September. YTS was honored to participate as one of the partner organization in this event, inspiring youth through learning about global issues in development and sustainable environment. One of the YTS Board of Directors, Eric Meijaard, also contributed to an environmental lesson during the event. The students also learned about other current world challenges like poverty and human rights issues, and brought home some knowledge to reflect upon within themselves about how the young generation can contribute to make the world a better place to live in.

Kahayan: Mapping village boundaries

While continuing our regular support in strengthening livelihoods and village government capacities, our partner villages in Damang Batu Subdistrict asked for help in marking their village boundaries. Yuddis, our Project Coordinator and Agus, the Project Officer, responded to this request and completed a survey in eight villages in August.

A mapping program had already been started by the Public Works Agency of Gunung Mas early this year as part of finalizing the district's spatial planning documents. Boundary marks were placed along the border of adjacent villages. However, some villagers decided to remove the marks, as they thought they were not correctly placed. The two YTS staff, together with the villagers and village government, literally walked along the village borders and confirmed or repositioned every marker on the border of Tumbang Marikoi, Posu, Maraya, Lawang Kanji, Karetau Rambangun, Tumbang Anoi, Karetau Sarian and Mahuroi villages.

Taking this initiative is basically in line with our resolution from last year, which was to get closer to indigenous issues. According to these villages, there has never been a clear designation of village boundaries. This clarity, said Yuddis, is apparently needed for these villages to make decisions on how they want to optimize their resources and plan their development. A clear village boundary would also help them to further find out the status of forest and land areas within their village.

Prior to the survey, Yuddis and Agus also took the opportunity to discuss the importance of getting the villagers on the same page regarding their village boundary, so as to avoid conflicts in the future. By bringing together villagers and key people who understand the village area well, we hope that the participation process is valued as much as the mapped boundaries themselves.



The newly placed boundary markers in Tumbang Masukih after the survey

Ecological Economics in Mercury Pollution Debates

YTS has been collaborating with the Canadian International Research and Development Institute (CIRDI) and the Economic and Social Research (ESCR) on a research initiative entitled 'Positioning ecological economics in mercury pollution debates: national planning in Indonesia's small-scale gold mining sector'.

This research rethinks the ecological economics of addressing mercury pollution in Indonesia's artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) sector, focusing on three axes of debate: (1) mercury trade controls as part of a mercury phase-out strategy; (2) national budgeting for local capacity-building in gold mining areas; and (3) socio-ecological and power complexities of technology transfer.

Indonesia is the world's third largest source of mercury pollution after China and India, and extensive literature has documented negative environmental and health costs of mercury use in ASGM. However, the sector provides vital livelihoods to rural populations and, despite restrictive policies, mercury remains widely used in ASGM.

The study examines critical issues surrounding Indonesia's National Action Plan for ASGM to

implement the Minamata Convention on Mercury, drawing on lessons from action research in mining communities in four provinces - South Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, Central Java and East Java, where donor-supported projects were launched to minimise mercury use in ASGM communities.

The findings of this research will give new insights to Indonesian government on how ASGM sectors improve community welfare. Miner's experiences and histories on ASGM will also be interesting parts in this research.



One of the branches of the Kahayan River in Tewang Pajangan Village where mining has actively taken place, affecting the water and the vegetation around it

Ginto Usop: A Long Path to Transparency

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plan realized with the fund. "There were a lot of protests, from the villagers, from the Treasurer and other government staff. Not to mention the difficulties in administration skill. I had to get all my knowledge out. I was lucky with the computer training from YTS; I was not so much computer literate", said Ginto laughing. He added that his working in the Village Council for two years before, and serving as the Head of the Village Management Group with YTS since 2004 was the other experience that he took advantage of. "That was the time when I felt the word participation really comes alive. I thought, I would not be able to do this on my own, and this is for the whole village anyway. So I decided to call them together and hear their voices" explained Ginto. Taking this step was not an easy way either, as he had to break the community's habit of leaving everything to the village government for village development.

What made him survive? "I did not do it myself" Ginto explained. "I have the Treasurer, the Village Council and of course, the community. They were the ones that urged me. So, this is not my idea exclusively. It was originally their form of participation. I want to give them what they want, which is a clear and detailed explanation of how the budget is spent and what the results are. They also asked me to include them in planning, and in participating in the infrastructure work. So, that's it".

Ginto said, as he grows to understand more about development, apparently his people too, were making the same progress. "I wouldn't have been able had I just done it myself. Even if all the government staff is on board, the community is the most important element. Because eventually, the result will be enjoyed not only by the government, right?"

How Ginto respects the voice of the people has minimized the high concern for misuse of the fund, and creates a greater sense of ownership in development implementation. "I must say it is also the participation from the community that makes it better. We practice what we know and learn" said Ginto firmly.



One of the strategies used to impose transparency in Mangkuhung is the use of the YTS information kiosk, in which the budget and expenses reports are made accessible for all villagers

Lestari Project

YTS responded to a call for a proposal issued by LESTARI/USAID to implement the project 'Collaborative Management and Sustainable Livelihood Initiatives' which will run for two years. The project targets six strategic landscapes in Indonesia, including Central Kalimantan. We proposed involving eight villages in Damang Batu subdistrict, Gunung Mas Region, to become involved in co-management and development of sustainable livelihoods, as well as in a Public Private Partnership (PPP) with our affiliated company, KSK.

ACN Singapore Conference

In mid-July, the ASEAN Corporate Social Responsibility Network (ACN) held a workshop in Singapore to share current findings and knowledge about CSR in the region. According to a recent survey, companies in Thailand are the most advanced in CSR practices. YTS was invited to share the results of an ACN-funded study it implemented in Gunung Mas Regency. Ministry of Social and

Ministry of Manpower visit to Bukit Batu

On June 13th, YTS was visited by the Social Ministry and Manpower Ministry as part of requirement for the foundation's legal status. YTS took the guests to Bukit Batu to visit YTS beneficiaries who have been running fish raising and fish breeding businesses as their livelihood activity.

Climate Change and Follow up Plan to Post COP – 21 Paris by KLHK and UNDP

On June 21st, YTS attended a meeting of the 21st UNFCCC (COP 21) or the Twenty-first Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Palangka Raya. This meeting discussed the Paris Agreement, a form of legally binding new global agreement for managing climate change caused by global warming, which will start in 2020. This event was organized by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) as the National Focal Points for UNFCCC and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and was attended by stakeholders from government, NGOs, and the private sector in Central Kalimantan.

Social Ministry seeks to strengthen NGOs in Indonesia

On August 10th, YTS participated in a training hosted by the provincial Social Agency entitled 'Strengthening Social Organization Management'. We learned how to register the Yayasan with an online system facilitated by the Social Ministry. This event was attended by around 40 participants from various social foundations in Central Kalimantan.

Meeting with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry on Land Access Issues

On June 22nd, YTS attended a coordination meeting in the provincial Environment Agency (BLH Kalteng) on land degradation impacted by Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM). This event was attended by all environmental agencies in Central Kalimantan. YTS was invited by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) as a stakeholder that works with miners in the ASGM area in Galangan, Kareng Pangi, Katingan.

Discussion on potential collaboration with CU Betang Asi

On August 3rd, YTS had a meeting with Yohannes Chanking, the Head of Capacity-Building at the Credit Union. The aim of the meeting was to find out about the Credit Union capacity-building and micro-credit programs in order to link them with YTS's community development program. YTS tries to collaborate with the CU to provide financial access for partner communities.

Forest Formalization in Bawan, Pulang Pisau District

On August 23rd, YTS attended the formalization of the Village Forest (Hutan Desa) and Community Forest (Hutan Kemasyarakatan) in Bawan, Pulang Pisau District, with BPSKL (Social Forestry & Environmental Partnership Unit) and its Working Team. We were there to learn about the process in order to prepare for implementation of the USAID LESTARI project on collaborative and sustainable forest management.

Nonviolent Communication Training for YTS

In mid-September, Simon Beck, a Canadian expert in Nonviolent Communication (NVC) trained all YTS staff in the NVC methodology. It was a great eye- and feeling-opener for everyone, as we all learned the importance in our one-on-one communication of understanding the need of the other person and our own need when negotiating or discussing something. Both have to be addressed.

Agenda

October

Kahayan

Preparation for Village Review
Assist with the Village Reporting Mechanism

Bukit Batu

External Evaluation

ASGM

Pre-Project Steering Committee Meeting in Jakarta

November

Kahayan

Village Review
Assist with the Village Reporting Mechanism

Bukit Batu

Proposal Finalisation to submit to Marine & Fishery Agency

ASGM

Project Steering Committee Meeting in Jakarta

December

YTS Annual Review

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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