



Borneo Ecotourism Solutions and Technologies (BEST)



ANNUAL REPORT 2015

VISION

To improve human life

OBJECTIVES

1 Basic Needs Projects

To interrupt poverty and dependency by raising funds to implement projects to improve health and hygiene in rural communities, and provide for basic needs such as water tanks and equipment to increase agriculture productivity

2 Building Capacity

To alleviate poverty by building capacity to promote and develop alternative employment and generate income in addition to traditional farming, fishing, hunting to promote sustainable use of natural resources and food production in Sabah.

3 Training Opportunities

To promote gender equality by providing job and training opportunities to empower women and girls

4 Modern Technologies

To test and apply modern technologies and environmental management practices in a local setting and to provide an economic model for sustainable development

5 Social Entrepreneurship

To develop business, human and knowledge capital in rural communities through capacity building, skill training, technical assistance and leadership development programs of the local communities and to develop small enterprises through social entrepreneurship.

6 Partnership

To collaborate with other academic institutions, government agencies, NGOs and private sector organizations and leverage on their resources for mutual benefits to achieve its objectives.

7 Environment

To promote gender equality by providing job and training opportunities to empower women and girls

TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

2015 has been a blessed year for Borneo Ecotourism Solutions and Technologies (BEST) Society regardless of all the challenges we have encountered. There are a lot of improvements and changes in BEST Society, as we align ourselves with the new era. New methods of empowering communities were introduced by our president, Mr. Albert Teo and his team set a new benchmark for us to continue our journey with a new approach in empowering others, especially the communities in need.

We are pleased to announce that BEST Society (Approval No: LHDN.01/35/42/51/179-6.6721) has finally received approval from the Ministry of Finance on our tax free status under **Subsection 44(6) ACP 1967** which provides a deduction for any cash donations to an approved institution or organisation which is not operated or conducted primarily for profit.

BEST Society had faced many challenges while working for the mutual benefits of the communities and the organisation. 2015 was a challenging year for BEST Society. Camp Lemaing, the 16-beds eco-lodge built by Borneo Eco Tours and BEST Society with the collaboration of Arkitrek

and Sabah Society had to be dismantled because it was severely damaged by two mud-floods. The mud-floods occurred a month after the 5.9 Richter scale earthquake in Ranau on 5th June. The heavy rain carried loosened rocks and debris from the earthquake and transformed the surrounding landscape beyond recognition. The structure that was meant to be relocated to the new site was washed away. The RM 300,000 Camp Lemaing was declared a total loss and closed. A project which took us and the local staff three years to build and just three weeks to dismantle. It was without a doubt our **“most successful failure”**.

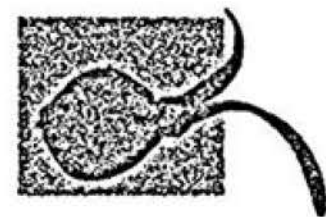
At present, BEST Society continues to empower the community in Kiau with the collaboration of GOMPITO (a local NGO in Kiau) through the “Kiau 5 Year Recovery Plan” to provide Computer Classes and English Classes to the community by renovating the GOMPITO office building as their place of learning. This project is funded by CIMB Foundation, which started last November and covers the improvement of the historical trail in Kiau.

Special thanks to our local and international sponsors and partners. It is with their support that we can continue to develop and implement projects that help local communities in Borneo, which eventually transform their lifestyle for a better livelihood.

Our Sponsors for the year 2015 are:



Our Partners for the year 2015 are:



Arkitrek



As of December 2015, Borneo Eco Tours and Sukau Rainforest Lodge have contributed RM 542,397.00 (33%) and RM 266,765.00 (16%) out of total RM 1,629,663.00 to BEST Society for community and environmental works.

With the spirit of teamwork, BEST Society is ready for new adventures and challenges in 2016.

2015

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COMMUNITY

CAMP LEMAING

SOFT OPENING



Arkitrek



In conjunction with the soft opening of Camp Lemaing, we have sponsored four groups on a FAM trip between January and February 2015. The first three groups that went to Camp Lemaing in January were SkyCommunity (14 pax), and our sponsors Sabah Society (16 pax) and Sabah Credit Corporation (16 pax).

In February, a total of 16 local community members from Kiulu Farmstay were hosted to a two days/one night stay to give exposure to the concept of community development and ecotourism and to study the operational aspects and intricacy of running community based tourism business and to build tourism capacity for their community in anticipation of our new tourism development projects in their own villages at Kiulu Farmstay. Once they return from the trip, the local community members will utilise their experience and knowledge to create their own tourism product.

Camp Lemaing is a community project initiated by Sabah Society and funded by Sabah Credit Corporation and another sponsor with a total grant of RM 130,000.00 and the balance of RM170,000 was funded by Mr. Albert Teo. Together with the team from Borneo Eco Tours led by Baton Bijamin and team from BEST Society provided their expertise in developing Camp Lemaing to be a successful community based ecotourism model project. Borneo Eco Tours (BET) helped to develop, package, promote and market this camp internationally as a world class eco camp. The camp was designed in collaboration with local architecture firms, Arkitrek and Hasegawa & Xavier Associates.



Local villagers from Kiulu Farmstay at Minitinduk Gorge



Youths from SkyCommunity crossing the Kedamaian River



Group from Sabah Society

ASRAMA BANTAYAN JOY CENTRE (ABJC)

On Tuesday, 17th March 2015, BEST Society visited Asrama Bantaran Joy Centre (ABJC) for an inspection on the renovation work.



ABJC is a students' hostel which provides accommodation to students from nearby villages to attend school at Sikuati without having to go through hours of travelling from their house. However, this hostel was in a bad condition due to its age. ConocoPhillips decided to fund a total of RM 17,100.00 for renovation to improve the facility. After 10 months of hard work, Pastor Oh Sung Doh and Mr. Jerri Mulihin, who are the managers of the project, managed to complete the renovation works including dormitories, replacing kitchen concrete roofing, water tanks, repainting of the exterior building, doors and piping works.

The fund was also used for administration, labour for Mr. Jerri Mulihin while Pastor Oh managed the project voluntarily.

Some broken ceiling fans and lamps were also replaced and utensils donated by generous donors. Now, the students are now able to use the new kitchen.

BEST Society would like to convey a big thank you to ConocoPhillips, Pastor Oh and Mr. Jerri for their generous support.



ABJC Hostel – Kitchen (After)



The newly painted ABJC Hostel



ABJC – Kitchen (Before)



ABJC – Kitchen (After)

190 VILLAGERS FROM KIAU RECEIVE FREE MEDICAL AND DENTAL SERVICES



The Kiau village headman getting medical check-up



Children enjoying the Reading Bus Program



A villager getting a free ear check-up



Skycommunity



BEST Society, SkyCommunity, Sabah State Health, Kota Belud Dental Department, Borneo Eco Tours and Camp Lemaing organised a joint medical camp in Kiau Village on 21st March 2015. There were approximately 150 and 40 visitors who received medical and dental treatments respectively. 43 volunteers were involved in this program.

A total of RM 6,573.50 was spent for this project which included logistic, meals for volunteers and

complimentary stay for 24 volunteers at Camp Lemaing. BEST Society contributed RM 1,533.50, Borneo Eco Tours (RM 1,800.00) and Camp Lemaing sponsored two days one night stay at RM 3,240. SkyCommunity sponsored the drugs and medicines (RM 7,250.00) and coordinated the volunteers from SkyCommunity, St. Paul Coptic Medical Mission-Egypt, government hospitals, private clinics and private sectors.

BEST SOCIETY RECEIVES GRANT AWARD FROM SHELL

On 7th May 2015, BEST Society received a second RM 40,000.00 grant from Shell under the category of Sustainable Livelihood. The grant was presented by Tourism, Culture and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Panglima Masidi Manjun. Shell has been supporting BEST Society's organic farming project that is empowering the local farmers from Kampung Rampai Besar, Kudat and is currently in its 2nd Phase.

The Organic Farming project had started early May 2015 with the first activity in which, the land owner cum project liaison officer in Kg. Rampai Besar, Kudat, Mr. Jerri and other participants started to level the site and coordinated the irrigation system to ensure the plants will get sufficient water supply for the growing process. There are ten (10) participants who stepped forward to accept the challenge to start their own organic farm.



Shell Malaysia Sabah General Manager, Puan Siti Sulaiman and Datuk Seri Masidi Manjun with all the Sustainable Development Grants Award 2015 recipients



Mr. Timothy Teo, on behalf of his father, Mr. Albert Teo, receiving the grants award from Shell



BORNEO ECOTOURISM SOLUTIONS AND TECHNOLOGIES (BEST) SOCIETY SEND OUT A GROUP OF FEMALE VOLUNTEERS TO SUPPORT HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Building house for the needy with Habitat for Humanity was a monthly activity organised by BEST Society and Borneo Eco Tours. This program had started since 2014. On 20th June 2015, eight volunteers from Borneo Eco Tours participated in this activity to contribute man power to build the house.

It was a privilege for the team that the Habitat for Humanity National President (Malaysia)

Mr. Allen Tong and Habitat for Humanity – Sabah President Mr. George Chong with Mr. Anthony Tham and Mdm. Emily Togium, the board members, came to the site to support all the volunteers.

BEST Society and Borneo Eco Tours will continue to help by sending another group next time.



The girls with the Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors



Volunteers working together regardless of different background

BENGKOKA LIVING WATER PROJECT PHASE 5: KG TUTUWON, PITAS

On 22 August 2015, the team from Borneo Ecotourism Solutions and Technologies (BEST) Society left Kota Kinabalu for a three-hour journey to Kg. Tutuwon, Pitas to work on its fifth Bengkoka Living water project. Bengkoka Living Water project is a project funded by ConocoPhillips to help find water solution to villages in rural areas in Pitas region, the poorest area in Sabah and Malaysia. The project started in 2012 at Kg Lugu and is now in its Phase 5 for Kg. Tutuwon and Phase 6 for Kg. Nibang. ConocoPhillips had funded RM 18 408.00 and RM 7788.00 to these two phases respectively.

Initially, the objective of the visit was to do inspection and interview with the recipients of

water tanks in Kg Tutuwon and Kg Nibang. However, after the first house inspection, the team decided to find a better solutions instead of providing only water tanks which will only provide rainwater six months in a year. Moreover, there was already at least 1 existing water tank in each of the houses. Gravity water was also available nearby throughout the year and seemed to be the best solution. A fruitful discussion between BEST Society together with representatives from Kg. Tutuwon, Pastor Inggi and Pendeta Jonius who trekked fifteen minutes crossing rubber estate owned by Pastor Francis to look for the small stream up at the hillside for a potential gravity water location.



Second visit to Kg Tutuwon



BEST Society team meeting with Pendeta Inggi and Jonius

A survey was done by the team to quantify the items needed for the water gravity project. Based on the survey and a quick evaluation, the main items needed were 2 units of 400 gallons near the water source; 400M of 4

that the majority wanted to pull out as the water pipe did not reach their individual houses and wanted BEST to build the pipe. BEST was not willing to do the piping so as not to cultivate the spirit of dependency which leads to toxic charity. Another meeting was held subsequently in Pitas with the leaders and the District Officer DO to persuade them to proceed with the original plan. Through his persuasion and to their credit, this was agreed upon and being implemented. An official hand-over ceremony is planned to be held on March 5 with the DO as guest of honor. This Living Water Project Phase 5 had already spent RM 15,977.00 from the budget funded by ConocoPhillips.

The water source from hill



inches and 300M of 3 inches poly pipe for the connection to the 400 gallons tanks with 2 units of 1000 gallon tanks near to Pastor Francis' house. It was agreed the villagers will provide the labour while BEST will provide the materials.

On 9th December 2015, BEST Society went to Kg. Tutuwon for a second visit to inspect the water tanks and pipes that had been delivered beforehand. It was reported to BEST Society

With the execution of this gravity water project, the community of Kg. Tutuwon, Pitas will have running water all year round, with of course good maintenance and care.


ConocoPhillips

KIAU RECOVERY PLAN

On 9th December 2015, BEST Society had received the first tranche funding disbursement total of RM36,230.10 from CIMB Foundation for GOMPITO office building renovation, Computer Classes and English Classes. The second tranche disbursement will be used to improve the jungle trail in Kiau Nuluh, which cost RM 20,000.00.

The aftermath of the earthquake on 5th June 2015 has affected the surroundings of Kg Kiau Nuluh. This has led BEST Society to initiate the 5 Year Kiau Recovery Plan, which focuses on building capacity of the committee (GOMPITO and Local Community Organisation) and to develop ecotourism projects in Kg Kiau including homestays, community hut and trail and train local children with English and computer classes.

Up to December 2015, the office building had been enlarged with new toilet bowl, sink, ceiling, and the main room had been painted to a new color. Window grilles had also been installed.

This project will benefit Kg Kiau Nuluh and Kg Kiau Bersatu which have approximately 1,500 residences. Kiau Recovery Plan had commenced in November 2015.



GOMPITO



Workers are changing the ceiling



Installing the grill



Electrician is rewiring

ENVIRONMENT

BEE FARMING AT SUKAU



On 29th April 2015, BEST Society hosted a training program for Bee Farming at Sukau conducted by Mr. Jerri Mulihin to 10 representatives from the local community in Sukau. Simon Louvard, our enthusiastic French volunteer and Suhailie Kahar, our in-house

naturalist at Sukau Rainforest Lodge were the officers in charge from Sukau Rainforest Lodge and have identified ten potential representatives from local community in Sukau.



Mr. Jerri Mulihin (right end), Simon Louvard (second from left) and Mr. Suhailie Kahar (second from right) with the local community in Sukau, which was led by Mr. Madia Bin Top (fifth from left)



Mr. Jerri is conducting an indoor class about bee farming in Sukau Rainforest Lodge



BEE FARMING AT SUKAU

On 27th November 2015, after eight months of surveys, education and training, we finally transferred our first beehive to Sukau. These wild bees have been trapped in Kg. Pangkalan Bukit Garam, 64km far from Sukau, by our beekeeper and trainer Amat. We will as a first priority, work with and keep only local honey bees so as not to disturb the ecosystem surrounding the Kinabatangan River.

In Sukau, bees are seen as insects that sting badly and a sign of bad luck. By knowing this

matter, educating and training the local people remains as one of our challenges while developing bee farming around the village.

Our last hive inspection with the participants was on 12th December 2015, which showed us that the bees acclimatize perfectly to their new environment. They are breeding and building new combs, meaning the population of the colony is growing .



Amat (left) in his new bee suit donated by BEST Society and Simon (right)

EDUCATION

VISIT BY DESIGNATED AREAS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ADMINISTRATION (PUBLIC)/ DASTA



On 14th March 2015, 12 representatives from Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public)-DASTA visited our office. They came all the way from Thailand to listen to Mr. Albert Teo's presentation on BEST Society and to learn about our community works. The group consisted of Ms. Wanvipa Phanumat (Community Capacity Building Officer), her colleagues and several selected villagers from northern Thailand. According to

Ms. Wanvipa, the reason she chose BEST Society was because BEST Society had won international awards and both Borneo and Thailand have similar cultural and natural resources and it was easier for their local villagers to absorb the learning process. They spent 6 days in Borneo visiting several interesting places in Sabah including the Virgin Coconut Oil (VCO) processing centre, Meranjak Longhouse and other cottage industries.



Mr. Albert Teo (holding the plaque) receiving a token of appreciation from the representative of Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public)-DASTA

SIGNAL HILL ECO FARM

Led by Mr. Albert Teo, BEST Society and some of its members visited Signal Hill Eco Farm on 1st July 2015. Three members of Organic Farm Phase 2 from Sikuati, Kudat also came for the visit.

The purpose of this visit was to learn about the main product of the Eco Farm, the operation and the owner of the Eco Farm, Mr. Lee. The event was also as an exposure for the participants of organic farm phase 2 in Sikuati, Kudat.

Mr. Lee's method to control the cycle of the farm was based on nature. To name some of

the methods, he used warm water to control the temperature of the soil, watered the plant three times a day, removed the bottom leaves of the plants (such as chili's tree) so that the pest from soil will not come up, and fed the chicken with herbs for healthier chickens. "Take the right food to eat" was emphasised by Mr. Lee after a productive sharing session with BEST Society.

Organic Farming in Sikuati, Kudat had started since May 2015 with Shell Sustainable Livelihood Fund of RM 40,000.00.



Mr. Lee receives visitation from BEST Society

ORGANIC FARMING AND ORGANIC FERTILIZER PROCESSING TRAINING



In collaboration with Life Organic Enterprise, BEST Society had organised a one-day training on 7th November 2015 at BioXpert Agriculture Centre, which is owned by Life Organic. The program started as early as 8.00 in the morning with theories and ended with practical training at 5.00 in the evening. A total of 20 farmers participated in the training and all of them are local community members from

Sikuati, Kudat (Organic Farming Phase 2 Participants-Program funded by Shell Malaysia) and Kiulu. Through this program, participants learned the proper way to plant organic vegetables and to produce compost from the green waste. Total of RM 2,000.00 was spent for this event. Fund was fully supported by Shell Malaysia.



Participants with their trainer, Mr. Ben

ENTREPRENEUR SEMINAR FOR THE ORGANIC FARMING (OF) PARTICIPANTS BY DIRECTOR OF TEKUN (SABAH & SARAWAK)



BEST Society's Project Liaison Officer in Kudat, Jerri Mulihi had organised the Motivational and Entrepreneur Seminar for the Organic Farming (OF) Phase 1 & 2 participants and other local community members on 3rd December 2015. There were a total of 26 participants who attended the half day seminar.

The invited speaker was Mr. Hemin Osumbing, the Director of TEKUN Nasional (Sabah & Sarawak).

In the meantime, OF Phase 2 is in its second production stage. Farmers are in the midst of plowing the soil and ready to plant vegetables after Christmas.



Mr. Hemin Osumbing with the participants



Mr. Hemin giving his session