

## **Strengthening Women's Participation through Collective Action for Inclusive Decision making Processes: Lessons Learned from Two Villages in Jambi Province, Sumatra, Indonesia**

*Yuliana L. Siagian, Brihannala Morgan, Yentirizal, and Neldysavrino*

---

*In the context of decentralization, communities' participation becomes a key to build a successful learning process by providing opportunity for access and control to both men and women towards better decision making processes. This paper presents preliminary research findings from the villages of Sungai Telang and Lubuk Kambing, Jambi Province, that reveal women's experiences of various types of gender inequity. These inequities preclude women's participating effectively in decision making processes for development planning, both within the family and at the village level.*

*We are using the approach of Participatory Action Research, and working with four groups, two all women, and two all men. In Sungai Telang, there are significant matrilineal tendencies; whereas Lubuk Kambing presents more patrilineal or at least bilateral leanings. In both communities, women are actively involved in day to day natural resource management. A central purpose of our research is to catalyze more effective collective action among these naturally occurring groups. One of our goals is to strengthen community members' capacity to make their aspirations known at the district level.*

*This paper will examine both people's motivations to engage in collective action, and provide some indicators for the assessment of its effectiveness in these two communities.*

*Key Words: collective action, participation, women, learning, action research, decision making*

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

For decades, natural resource management in Indonesia has been controlled by a highly centralized state, characterized by authoritarian rule, massive exploitation of the nation's natural resources, and the marginalization of forest dependent communities, justified through national laws and policies. After the fall of Soeharto in 1998, political reform and economic crisis have engendered important changes to governance and policy in Indonesia, creating unprecedented opportunities and challenges for forest dependent people. One of the changes has been the shift in power relations from central to district governments, through what is referred to as decentralization<sup>2</sup>. The decentralization effort was then realized at the beginning of January 2000, devolving most authority of governance to the district (*kabupaten*) level.

Although new decentralization laws transfer decision making over forest management to local governments (district level), these laws are vague and filled with loopholes, creating a great deal of uncertainty, as well as opportunity, in interpreting how they should be implemented. Conflicting laws between departments also complicate finding legal solutions to problems with few mechanisms for meaningful input from communities. Communities are given new responsibilities to deal with resource management and creation; while at the same time legal and administrative support is often lacking of enabling them to assume these

---

<sup>2</sup> The Government of Indonesia initiated decentralization in 1999 by the issuance of Law No. 22/1999 on regional governance, where the central government transferred some functions to a lower level of authorities. Having learned from four years' experience with the implementation of decentralized policies, the GoI has recently issued a new law (No. 32/2004 replacing Law 22/99) which provided criteria for subsidiary between central, provincial and district governments and called for a stronger and interlinked relationship among the levels of the governance system.

new responsibilities. Decentralization and better framework are important factors for recognition of property rights and promoting collective action for the poor.

In parallel, other legislation<sup>3</sup> was also issued to enable people's participation and the wide involvement of women in the decision making process. The law required that political parties include a minimum of 30% women representatives in the list of candidates for election. Another law provides a better mechanism for involving a wide range of stakeholders, including women, in determining development programs based on local aspirations. However, women in the local House of Representatives remained few in number and their voice seemed to continue to be ineffective at family as well as governance or policy levels. The new laws have yet to ensure that women would have better access to decision making processes and resource benefits.

Even in day to day life, women face severe inequalities in the division of labor that have put women in a weak position with regard to economic opportunities with the result that women also have a weak position in controlling, accessing and influencing decision-making processes. This paper addresses women's inequalities in decision making at the family as well as the village level. We have attempted to engage women in collective action in pursuit of more inclusive decision making.

In the following pages, we first describe the context of our research, followed by an outline of our methodology using PAR, and then a site description. The third section describes the PAR process in collective action conducted by targeted groups through our facilitation (efforts, approaches, successes and constraints); this is then followed with the concluding section which provides lessons learned and suggestions for further research.

## **COLLECTIVE ACTION, PROPERTY RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S ROLES**

Collective action can be defined as an action taken by a group (either directly or on behalf through an organization) in pursuit of members' perceived shared interests (Marshall, 1998). Additionally, we understood the group as having been formed voluntarily or self-formed, informally or formally at the instigation of external institutions. Ostrom (2004) added that collective action occurs when more than one individual is required to contribute to achieve an outcome. In our case, collective action can also be defined as conscious working together by local stakeholders to take advantage of social and political opportunities in development plans, as well as coordinated actions in policy development by different governmental agencies and other stakeholders with their shared goals to deliberate issues towards a coherent and integrated program that benefits the poor.

Bromley (1991) as cited in Di Gregorio et al (2004) defines property rights can be defined as "the capacity to call upon the collective to stand behind one's claim to a benefit stream". This is not only the right to completely and exclusively control a resource (ownership), but also the right to utilize and to manage, and to decision making. In Indonesia, we recognize various types of rights such as state rights over forestland (protection forests, national parks, production and limited production forests) and over areas for non-forestry uses. At the community level, we recognize a bundle of rights such as community rights, traditional or customary rights (individual and communal).

One of the great concerns for people living in forested areas is access to resources. Ostrom (2004) mentioned that recognized property rights not only reinforce collective action that is needed for collective management, but also provide security for individuals and households. This is also a challenge especially for women to obtain equal access to property rights and be able to participate freely in decision making processes and economic activities. However there is also a growing recognition that collective action allows people to overcome limitations linked to lack of resources, power and voices. CA also underpins many community driven development (CDD) programs for service delivery, e.g. of water supply, health care and agricultural extension (Nitti and Jahiya, 2004). As with property rights, the poor and women are often at a disadvantage

---

<sup>3</sup> Law No. 30/2000 on Political Parties and Law 25/2004 on Development Planning System

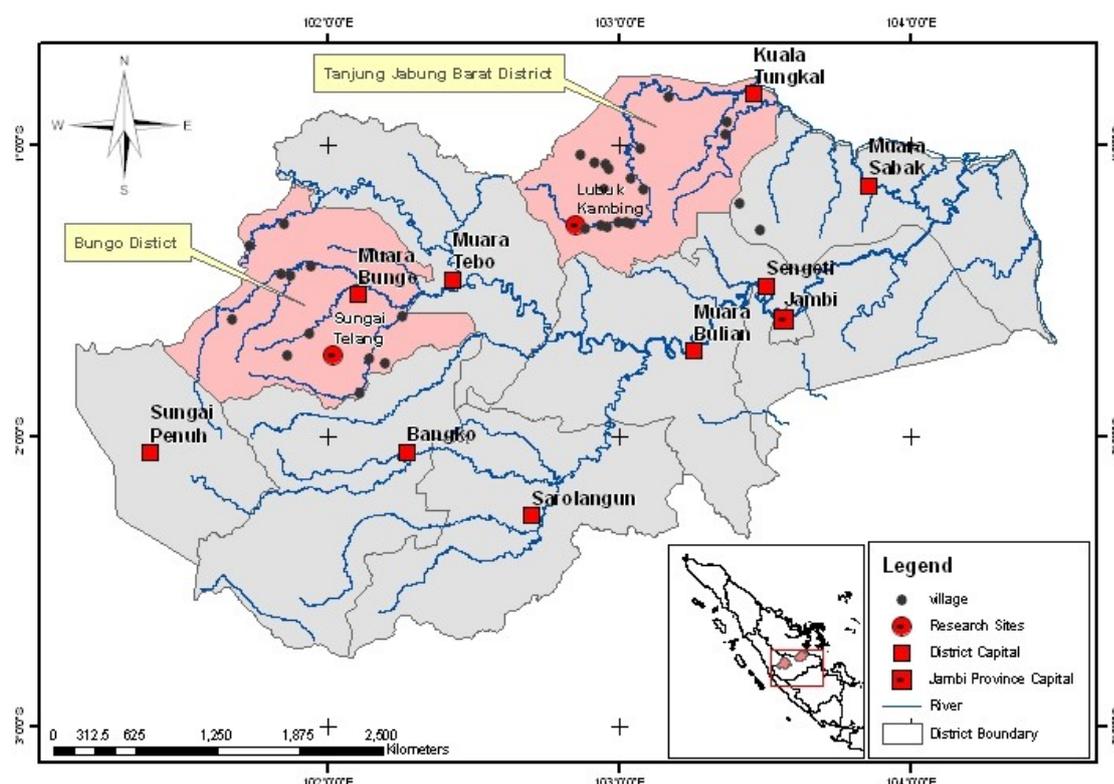
when it comes to collective action because of social exclusion, lack of resources, and domination of meetings by local elites (Di Gregorio et al. 2004).

This research takes the position that improvements in both people's and forests' well being will depend both on a) clarification of land ownership and use rights for both men and women, and b) a stronger civil society to monitor the activities of policy makers and to contribute to the development of locally appropriate policies and legislation. We have hypothesized in this research that collective action is a viable route to accomplishing these goals.

## RESEARCH SITES

The research was carried out in two villages, Sungai Telang (Bungo District) and Lubuk Kambing (Tanjung Jabung Barat District hereafter Tanjabbar), both located within Jambi Province (Figure 1). In terms of forest cover, Bungo has about 34.53% or 182,869.35 ha of its total area covered with forest (Bungo District Forestry Services, 2005), whereas Tanjabbar has 29.09 % of its total area, or 257,344 ha, of forest cover (Tanjabbar District Forestry Services, 2004). The two sites are located in similar ecological and socioeconomic situations but differ in terms of access to forest resources, forest governance arrangements, ethnic group diversity, strength of kinship relations, and level of interest from the sustainable forest development aspect as presented in Table 1. Both villages are located near the border of national parks, Kerinci Sebelat and Bukit Tiga Puluh, respectively and are also located close to ex-forest concession areas<sup>4</sup>.

Figure 1 – Map of Research Sites (CIFOR, 2005)



Most of the community in Sungai Telang are Minang ethnics, originally came from Padang, West Sumatera with strongest matrilineal tradition but there is some influence by the patrilineal Jambi system. The village has relatively strong customs and traditional institutions where in the system of matrilineal tradition, women inherit land although the access to make decision over the land remains under the right of her brother. Community groups, both women and men, are also organized in conducting collective action, mostly in agriculture. However, there is jealousy in social relation of the community between the indigenous and the trans-migrants in sharing portions of land. In this village, medium levels of conflict occurred between the

<sup>4</sup> Forest concession occupies the area of production forest or known as Industrial Forest Plantation (*Hutan Tanaman Industri*)

community and the forest concessionaire as community dependency on various forest resources towards the existence of timber company, cooperation, protected forest and production forest.

Lubuk Kambing has a wide range of people with diverse ethnic backgrounds. The original people are of the Jambi ethnic group with patrilineal tendencies, though their customs and traditional institutions are less strong than those in Sungai Telang. Community groups, both women and men, were not organized; however there is a relatively good relationship between the indigenous community and the migrants who include Acehnese, Batak, and Javanese from the transmigration area of Rimbo Bujang because of longstanding interaction with people from outside the village. There is some potential for conflict between the community and the National Park, forest concessionaire and oil palm company, particularly about land, as the community's growing population has begun to have difficulties finding sufficient land for swidden fields (particularly young couples). As in Sungai Telang, Lubuk Kambing's community is dependent on the various forest resources, which are adversely affected by the existence of timber company, oil palm company production forest and the national park.

In addition to governmental institutions and private companies, other stakeholders thought to have a linkage with local communities are other research project such as ACM-CIFOR<sup>5</sup> and ICRAF<sup>6</sup> and local NGOs which have been working in this area for many years.

Table 1 – Characteristics of Research Sites

No	Criteria	Bungo District	Tanjabbar District
		Sungai Telang	Lubuk Kambing
1	Accessibility	Good road, easy to reach, it is 2.5 hours from district capital, Muara Bungo	Good road, easy to reach, it is 3 hours from provincial capital, Jambi
2	Diversity of ethnic groups	Originally from Padang (Minang) + Jambi	Originally from Padang (Minang) + Melayu (Mawan tribe)+ Migrants from Aceh and Rimbo Bujang
3	Social Capital	Jealousy between indigenous community and trans-migrants	Relatively good relation between indigenous community and migrants (refugees)
4	Strength of customs and traditional institutions.	<b>Relatively Strong</b>	<b>Relatively Strong</b>
5	Level of conflict (community vs community, community vs private sectors)	<b>Medium</b> (conflict occurred with forest concessionaire)	<b>Medium</b> (Potential conflict with National Park, Industrial Forest Plantation, and oil palm plantation)
6	Level of interest from sustainable forest development aspect	Conservation and reforestation in protected forest ±200ha, destruction has reached ±30% of total forest area	High potential conflict on boundaries and land sustainability.
7	Accessibility to forest resources.	5km to the production forest and 2km to the protected forest.	1 – 5 km to the non forestry area 10km to the production area, and; 15 km to Industrial Forest Plantation
8	Strength of kinship ties versus potential internal conflict within the community.	<b>Relatively Strong</b>	<b>Relatively Strong</b>

<sup>5</sup> ACM refers to Adaptive Collaborative Management, a participatory approach built on participatory action research at the village level (cf. Hartanto et al. 2003, Colfer 2005; and Kusumanto et al. 2005, which describes ACM activities in nearby Baru Pelepat (Bungo District). CIFOR is the Center for International Forestry Research, in Bogor, Indonesia.

<sup>6</sup> ICRAF is the International Center for Research in Agro-forestry (now called the World Agro-forestry Center). It has a branch office in Bogor as well.

No	Criteria	Bungo District	Tanjabbar District
		Sungai Telang	Lubuk Kambing
9	District Government Development Program related to forest and forestry (including planned and current program)	Reconstruction of forest boundaries, production effort group ( <i>Kelompok Usaha Produksi</i> ), GNRHL, social forestry (from Special Allocation Funding of Reforestation Fund)	National Movement for Forest and Land Rehabilitation Program ( <i>Gerakan Nasional Rehabilitasi Hutan dan Lahan</i> )
10	Formal and informal institutions within the community with potential for collective action, including related to gender.	Village government, Village Representative, customary institution, Karang Taruna (youth group), farmers' group, women's group.	Village government, Village Representative, customary institution, loggers' group and women's group.
11	Indication of poverty level, compared to other district's villages	<b>As one of poor village in the district</b>	<b>As one of the poor village in the district</b>

The two research sites were selected based on these criteria:

- The composition of the community includes a diversity of ethnic groups and culture. We were particularly interested also in comparing matrilineal and patrilineal and/or bilateral inheritance systems, and their effects on women's roles and status.
- Community dependency on forest resources and some pressure on them.
- Community has access to forest resources.
- Level of conflict (possible pressures from outside the community and potential conflict or threats towards community and forest sustainability). We were initially seeking a middle level of conflict meaning that there was no fighting yet, but also there was some disagreement.
- Possible opportunities for overlap of interests between communities and existing district government development programs (so that research findings could contribute towards district government efforts to improve their district policies).
- Existing research activities or other development agencies/institutions (government, university or international organization).

## METHODS AND APPROACHES

This research is part of collaborative action research project conducted at district and village level, designed to identify, test and disseminate lessons on suitable decentralized governance mechanisms and processes for securing a routine and influential voice for local communities in decision-making on land use planning and resource benefit distribution. This project aims to engage local people throughout the research to ensure optimal capacity building for collective action over property rights; to secure more equitable flows from natural resource benefits for the poor and marginalized; and ensure uptake of project findings by government and local stakeholders.

This paper presents our approach to catalyzing community groups in two villages with both men and women through facilitation to strengthen their collective action efforts to reach common goals. The research also looks at how collective action enhances local people's access to influential decision-making networks so that policy outcomes reflect their long-term development interests. We develop this paper based on our preliminary findings during seven months (from January – August 2005) of intensive participatory action research with four groups, in particular with women groups in the two communities, we just started to work with in the last six months.

We have been working together with two village facilitators to catalyze collective action among community groups in the two village sites. These two facilitators are positioned in the villages to facilitate community

groups to follow the learning cycle of PAR. At the district, we are working in partnership with the BAPPEDA (District Development Planning Bureau) and *Dinas Kehutanan*, (District Forestry Service) in two districts. BAPPEDA is currently tasked with involving the public in preparing the district's development plans, and spatial plan for land use. Our BAPPEDA partners are well placed to use the findings and lessons generated through participatory action research with stakeholders at all levels to develop a more inclusive and equitable spatial plan for the area, based on clear and transparent property rights.

A fundamental aspect of this research is a commitment to a participatory approach to understanding communities and the problems that they face. The research methodology used by the project reflects this commitment for understanding and facilitating processes used in collective action.

## DATA COLLECTION

At the village level, the information gathered include two general categories—background information such as historical trends, stakeholder network and interactions, land ownership, socio-economic and livelihood information etc and information about the process undertaken in the course of facilitation. Intensive discussions were made with government officials *i.e.* BAPPEDA, Forestry Service Offices and others. We work together in this area to share knowledge and lessons learned among different stakeholders.

In order to collect the background information, we used a variety of research tools. The primary method of collecting detailed information was using semi-structured interviews with key members of the community. The list of questions were developed by the village facilitators with in-puts from researchers and district-level teams. This process, which is still on-going, is being conducted with all members of the targeted groups we are working with in both villages. The interviews are done individually in the interviewee's house, although family members and neighbors occasionally participate. The information collected includes questions about land ownership, land use, income, familial and gender-based responsibilities. In Sungai Telang, we identified 2 different type of women's group named *Gotong Royong* and *Pelhin*. The first group was selected as our target group and work though our facilitation while the second one was not. While our targeted groups are not a perfect random sample for the residents of the study villages, the results of the interviews appear consistent with our more general observations of life in the village and lead us to believe that they are fairly representative. To maintain the validity and accuracy, the facilitators maintained a field diary to record information and, at the end of every day, they wrote up their observations in this diary.

In effort to strengthening women's participation in decision making, we use PRA that provided various techniques for analyzing, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating collective action in rural development and resource management. PRA can be understood as growing family of approaches and methods to enable local people to share, enhance and analyze their knowledge of life and conditions, and plan, act, monitor and evaluate (Chambers, 1981). The use of different tools such as observation, joint walkthrough, resource mapping, ranking exercise, group discussions, etc., not only quickly generate valid information and support analysis by stakeholders, but also are enjoyable for those involved.

A series of PRA tools to assess background information, such as resource mapping has been used in both of the villages to gain a better understanding of resource rights and resource capture. In both villages, resource mapping has been done with male participants, and resource mapping with women's groups is planned for the near future. This mapping has helped in generating discussions to identify and establish current land uses and develop shared, local objectives for land use planning, as well as helping to establish a clearer understanding of relative access to benefits. Another tool, land transects, have been used to understand how land use has changed over time, particularly with the introduction of large transmigration projects. These tools, along with participant observation, have served to give us a good understanding of the social, economic, and cultural background, including social cohesion, presence of formal and informal organizations and women's groups, ethnic diversity, customary relations, etc., in the villages.

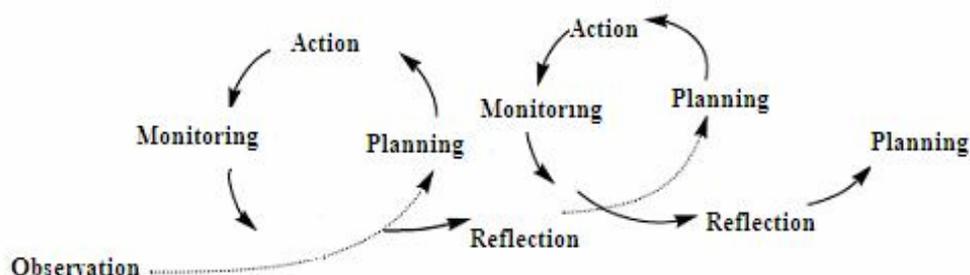
## PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH FOR FACILITATING COLLECTIVE ACTION

In recent years, research approaches have put more attention on the perspectives of the local people, an approach now often called “bottom-up” or “participatory,” where the scientist considers the local society to be both part of the solution and involved in debate on an equal footing (Castellonet and Jordan, 2002).

Action research is a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of those practices and the situations in which the practices are carried out. The approach is only action research when it is collaborative, though it is important to realize that action research of the group is achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members. (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988).

McCutcheon and Jung (1990) also described Action Research as systematic inquiry that is collective, collaborative, self reflective, critical and undertaken by participants in the inquiry. With PAR, we are trying to organize bottom-up identification of priorities through phases of planning, action, monitoring and reflecting as presented in Figure 2. As a continuous cycle, PAR allows insiders and outsiders together to decide what needs to be assessed, design the research and collect the necessary information.

Figure 2 – Participatory Action Research process



We assessed background information regarding the villages and the communities, and then identified collective action groups that already existed in the community. The project focused on pre-existing groups for two reasons:

- First, beginning with pre-existing group ensured that the members were already using some collective action in their day to day activities and already had good personal connections with each other, experience working together, previous forms of collective action done together and still continued to work together;
- Second, the advantage to work with existing groups is that they represent an ongoing expenditure of people’s time. Working with them does not require people to develop new communication patterns (at least initially), and it reduces the number of additional meetings people must attend. It represents an acknowledgement of the value of a part of their existing way of life. Such acknowledgement can be very important for developing or strengthening people’s self-confidence---also important for bringing about effective collective action (Colfer, in press).

We selected two groups per village as focus groups. At this point, some of these groups are directly linked to government programs and policies and some focused on resource rights. These groups also represent scales from family to hamlet. Village-wide possibilities were rejected because of the complications and costs of getting members widely dispersed hamlets together, as well as our belief that starting small is more sensible, given the time and money available. We wanted to try to focus on stimulating parts of the community to act, with little (other than straightforward facilitation and networking) being done directly by the facilitators. Each village facilitator focused on one all-male and one all-female group. In Lubuk Kambing, we focused on one all male *Kelompok Tani* (Farmers group) and one all female *Dasa Wisma* group, a subset of the government sponsored *Pendidikan Kesejahteraan Keluarga (PKK)* or *Family Welfare Movement* program. In

Sungai Telang, we chose to focus on the all female *Gotong Royong*—Shared Work—group and the all male farmers group.

We worked with the groups to identify issues, beyond the group's scope of normal action, that they might be interested in addressing. By applying a participant observation method, the village facilitators involved and participated in day-to-day life of the communities aiming to study and experience the events in the way the community experience them. Through discussion and group brainstorming, each group selected a specific focus for collective action. Their ideas included income generation efforts through selling cake and raising ducks, and addressing property rights issues through land certification and government sponsored rubber sapling programs. These projects were undertaken in addition to the naturally occurring collective action that the group already planned, although not all groups had on going projects. These new focus for collective action will be discussed later on in this paper.

After outlining initial topics, we began to lead the groups through the PAR steps of, planning, action, monitoring, and reflection. For the initial months of the project facilitation, the monitoring process was considered part of the reflection process, although it has recently begun to be considered distinctly. Throughout this process, we worked with the community to ensure that all relevant stakeholders were present in group discussion and to ensure community awareness of the importance of involving various stakeholders in their planning discussion. This is also to assure that all stakeholders have a share in the action processes. Action, which often involved going to the sub-district (*kecamatan*) or district (*kabupaten*) level for information, involved rotating members of the groups who went to meet with government officials. The information gathered is then put into practical applications or used to identify new ideas. A variety of facilitation techniques, including silent brainstorming using index cards, focus group discussions, individual discussions, informal discussions, etc. were used to ensure that even those who were not comfortable sharing bring out their voices in the group were given the opportunity to share their opinions.

While facilitating these collective action processes, the village facilitators observed the groups' progress. The facilitators were able to note changes developed both in the groups and in the ways that the individuals themselves changed as a result of the process. These results will be covered in detail in the following sections.

## **GROUP CHARACTERISTICS AND PAR LEARNING PROCESSES FOR CATALYZING COLLECTIVE ACTION**

In this section we describe how the learning process was introduced and implemented by the women's groups and men's groups, how they are task divided among them and how they work together or collectively.

Table 3. Group Characteristics

Groups	Description of Group	Description of Group Activities before PAR	Opportunity
1. Gotong Royong	<p><b>Sungai Telang</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comprised of all women that provide paid labor to aid other village members in their agricultural work.</li> <li>- The groups are all female, from young unmarried girls to old women, with the majority of members being mothers. No one is denied membership in a <i>Gotong Royong</i> group because of age or perceived ability.</li> <li>- The group engages in agricultural day labor.</li> <li>- There are currently 17 members.</li> <li>- There are one or two <i>gotong royong</i> groups in each hamlet of Sungai Telang.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When requested by a farm owner, the group's work includes harvesting chili (<i>cabe rawit</i>), clearing rubber forests, preparing irrigated rice agriculture, or any other form of agricultural work that requires a large number of people.</li> <li>- It is mandatory that all members of the group join.</li> <li>- For each day worked, each group member receives Rp. 15,000 (which must be supplemented out of pocket for those who do not join in that day's work).</li> <li>- The work does not depend on the ability or age of the members—simply on the presence of the people on the work day.</li> <li>- Payment can occur at the day of work, or it can be paid later, as long as all debts are settled before the fasting month (Ramadhan<sup>7</sup>).</li> <li>- The money is not used or disbursed individually but is collected by the head of group. Before the month of Ramadhan, the money is used to buy cooking oil and sugar. Each woman receives roughly 35 kilos of cooking oil and 40 kilos of sugar.</li> <li>- The group work day is divided into certain divisions, guaranteeing the employer a set work day. Work begins at 8 am and breaks are taken at 10 and 2:30 with a lunch break from 11:30 to 1 pm.</li> <li>- The group depends on the agricultural season. During the busy season this means that Gotong Royong groups will work two days a week. During the off season, there will be many weeks without work.</li> </ul>	<p>As the focus for the research, we selected this group because it is relatively small, with only 17 members. This made it feasible to interact with all members of the group individually. Other than its relatively low number of group members, it is not functionally different than any of the <i>Gotong Royong</i> groups.</p>

<sup>7</sup> Celebrated by Muslim religion to do fasting. Ramadhan ends with the biggest holiday for Muslims, and one in which much money is needed for buying new clothes, sacrificing a goat, etc.

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">2. Kelompok Tani Sinar Harapan (Farmer's group)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The group is an all-male village level organization that aims to help aid small farmers.</li> <li>- The group receives support from the agriculture extensions (PPL), a government official tasked with helping the development of village-level agriculture.</li> <li>- The group was formed when the government offered a program to improve the water ducts for irrigated rice agriculture. The program required that funds be received by a group.</li> <li>- The group draw their members from all of the <i>hamlet</i> in Sungai Telang.</li> </ul>	<p>The farmer group, or locally known as <i>KT- Sinar Harapan</i>, has limited activities. Since the group received a government aid in 1998, they have thus far initiated any collective action on their own. In 2001, the group received government aid in the form of rice seedlings, but only a few members of the group were interested, and the entire group was not involved in this process.</p>	<p>We chose to focus the <i>KT-Sinar Harapan</i>. Of the two groups in the village, this group seemed particularly well organized and interested in working on future projects together.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">3. Pelhin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This all-female groups operate on a reciprocal work relationship, exchanging work with the unit of day-worked.</li> </ul>	<p>Any woman can call for a <i>Pelhin</i> day when there is the need for a lot of work to be completed in a limited amount of time. Women are free to come to the <i>Pelhin</i> or not depending on their work schedule (in contrast to <i>Gotong Royong</i> groups, which are mandatory). When a woman participates in a <i>Pelhin</i> work day, she is then owed a days work from the owner of the farm. This can be paid off when the person calls a <i>Pelhin</i> day herself. When this woman calls a <i>Pelhin</i> day, it is mandatory that those who owe her attend. If it is not possible, there are two options. First, she can pay Rp. 15,000 to the person she owes, thereby paying off her work debt. Second, she can pay another woman Rp. 15,000 to work at the <i>Pelhin</i>. The woman being paid works off the debt of the woman paying her, and does not accrue any <i>Pelhin</i> debt from the woman whose land it being worked. When a debt is being paid off, there is no more debt—the woman whose land is being worked does not owe a work day to the woman whose land is being worked.</p> <p>These work relationships can become an extremely complex web, depending on how active a particular woman is at <i>Pelhin</i>. Women who participate in the <i>Pelhin</i> groups keep lists of whom they owe work, and who they are owed work by. Because people are completing old debts and incurring new debts constantly, it is hard to define who the members of a <i>Pelhin</i> group are. While some people are better friends and work on each other's land more regularly, there are no set groups of people who work in one group. There is no formal leadership in a <i>Pelhin</i> group, and there are no membership lists or meetings.</p>	<p><i>Pelhin</i> groups were not selected as a focus group but none the less provide an interesting example of the collective action process in Sungai Telang. <i>Pelhin</i> groups have existed in the village long beyond the memory of anyone in the village.</p>

**Lubuk Kambing**

**1. Dasa Wisma**

- The group is formed as part of the formal group Family Welfare Movement designated by the government for village women. Family Welfare Movement is a government programme with primary focus on women in rural areas that has been in existence since 1967 (ILO, 2002).  
 - The group comprises of 20 members of women and it is formed in each of the lowest administrative level.  
 - As also applied in other villages, village head's wife automatically performs as the leader to the entire Family Welfare Movement program in the village.

Dasawisma group originally formed in one of the hamlet, Lubuk Beringin, which initiated by the village-head's wife who was interested to revitalize this group within her own hamlet (Lubuk Beringin), focusing on medicinal plants named TOGA (*Tanaman Obat Keluarga*). The group was selected by the village-head's wife, she began with appointing two vocal women who will become the leader of the group and then later these leaders should try to find another 20 members to sign up as a group. Most of these women are engage in daily agricultural labor, not to mention the daily domestic work on their shoulders. These women unsatisfied with the way groups were formed and the members selected.

Before selecting one group to focus on in the learning process, we began to observe 2 existing Dasawisma groups named *Semangka* and *Pisang Lilin*, to get more ideas and information on their strength of motivation and enthusiasm to do collective action. Through several semi-structured interviews with a number of individuals in the group and also some group discussions, we decided to select that one Dasawisma group named *Semangka* that appeared to be very enthusiastic and have a stronger motivation to work together. Even though this group recently formed through a top-down process, based on our observation and information gathered, this group has good potential to link with activities at the district level, since it's a formal governmental program and its has its own allocated budget for the program.

**2. Kelompok Tani Tunas Harapan (Farmer's group)**

-The group is an all-male village level organization that aims to help aid small farmers.  
 - It is a group of 34 members of farmers in the hamlet of Sukamaju  
 - It is consisting of in-migrants and many of Javanese extraction focuses on agriculture crops.  
 - The group was initially formed by a group of people who have very influential position in the community.

Activities conducted by this farmers group n Sukamaju were limited in daily agriculture labor. The group as an organization was kept but not active in terms of the organizational activities. Even though most of the group members felt the need to work together however there was nobody tries to trigger the group members to act collectively as Kelompok Tani, instead they became more focus on individual agricultural activities. Meeting among farmers were also rarely conducted, but they often do the shared work (*gotong royong*) activities with the whole community in Sukamaju hamlet

We selected this group base on their strong motivation to improve their livelihoods and enthusiastically to work together.

## LEARNING PROCESS THROUGH PAR

In Sungai Telang, there are currently three different *Gotong Royong* groups, with membership from 17-40 members. Facilitated by this project, the *Gotong Royong* group A is interested in selling weavings to supplement their income. Based on the PAR process, the village facilitator began by working with the group to identifying what issues they might be interested in pursuing. Through discussions and informal chats they expressed their interest in developing an activity that produce a product with possibility to be marketed, to supplement the cash income that they received from their work with the *Gotong Royong* group. Most women of this *Gotong Royong* group already weave as a regular part of their activities, making mats, baskets, and other household necessities.

The group decided that the best way to get answers to their questions would be to meet with a women's group from Baru Pelepat, a village about 5 hours away in a neighboring sub district (also the research site of CIFOR's Adaptive Collaborative Management project), who had been successful in marketing their own weavings. These women were invited to present what had worked for them and answer questions from the women from Sungai Telang. Three women from Baru Pelepat came to Sungai Telang at the end of July 2005 for one evening, and spoke with members of *Gotong Royong* group A. Members of the other two *Gotong Royong* groups in the village also were present. A meeting to reflect on the results of this meeting and plan for future meetings is currently planned.

As for *Kelompok tani* (farmers group) in Sungai Telang there are two farmer groups. One group, *Maju Bersama*, focuses on rubber and other agro-forestry crops. The other group, *Sinar Harapan*, focuses on irrigated-rice agriculture. Similar with the *Gotong Royong* group, the village facilitator began by working with the group by determining together what activities or issues they might be interested in pursuing. The group was already interested in pursuing land certification. The reasons they gave included a concern about possible land conflicts, wanting to ensure that their land boundaries are stable, and ensuring that they will have a legal way to inherit their land to their children.

After expressing interest in certification, the village facilitator reflected with the group on what their initial steps might be. The group had a large number of questions about land certification that the village facilitator was not prepared to answer. Together they decided that the first step in the process would be to get information on the certification process. They invited government official from the relevant agencies to come and answer their questions. A meeting took place and was attended by over fifty participants. With the relevant information in hand, the group reflected that they were interested in getting their land certified through PRONA (National Agrarian Program), a government program aimed to provide mass certification of lands for the poor people on a low cost basis. Together they completed the application and sent them to the government office. The process is currently underway and in the recently held reflection process, the group decided to send a group member to the city to follow up on where the process has reached.

*Pelhin* as one of identified groups was considered as a good example of collective action existed in Sungai Telang. They are capable to collectively act to cultivate lands without a facilitation support. The member relation is bounded by the work system (see description of the group in Table 2). Many years ago (20-30 years in the estimation of the village head and his wife), an all male *Pelhin* group was developed. This group followed the same rules and arrangements as the all-female group. The male group failed after a few months because, according to the village head's wife, those men did not have time to trade labor and were working for cash..

although we have chosen one group to work with in Lubuk Kambing, through the PAR learning process, we in the practice couldn't work only with one group as it will create jealousy to other groups. Through the facilitation to the learning process, two *Dasawisma* groups are interested to focus on income generation efforts to supplement their cash income from agriculture using the skills they have. *Semangka* group has decided to sell cakes, while the other group, *Pisang Lilin*, thinks that they could raise ducks and sell the eggs to the market. These ideas derived from some of the women in the group who have experience on this field before. The village facilitator then began to work with the group on the process of how the group want to plan, take action, monitor the process and reflecting back of what/how the process they did has worked and

what hasn't work and why. The groups decided to conduct a regular meeting to reflect on their activities to reach their common goals. In this process of learning with the community, the village facilitator has only one role that is to catalyze the learning process within the group. From a village workshop that we conducted in May 2005 involving both women and men, we found out that the amount of time that women spent for domestic work has put them in a position to limited access to external information and economic sources.

However, Kelompok Tani (farmer group) in Lubuk Kambing, each of the farmer group was formed when the government offered relevant programs to help the farmers. Formed by a group of influential people in the village, this elite group has given their promise to find oil palm investors to the area for partnership cooperation, as it turned out that the realization to this promising opportunity never happen. Later in the future development of this group, they decided not to put more hope on the opportunity to have oil palm company to invest and develop the area, instead they continue to work together to improve their agricultural crops yield. Most of them are farmers who have permanently lived in this area, meanwhile others have just recently lived in this area and open a new land.

Based on the informal discussion with a number of farmer group members, village facilitators found out that the group was very seriously interested to do seasonal cultivation activities on their agriculture land. For example is soya beans cultivation on ex irrigated rice paddy field. For this activity, one of the farmer group members said that each member can afford to prepare land for at least 1 ha. The group also mentioned that they want to do this activity as their main source of income because most of the members of this group are new people who just moved and stayed in their area (RT<sup>8</sup> 15). Most of the lands cultivated by the farmers in Sukamaju have not yet produced its yield; therefore the community depends on the non irrigated rice paddy field as their main source of income.

The group found that there are challenges need to be faced in terms of lack of information and skills on the field of cultivating soya beans. After reflecting their challenges, they realized that they would need an expert on agriculture practice such as an agriculture extension to feed them with more information about the agriculture in good practice. Further processes were catalyzed by the village facilitator through the learning cycles. The groups met regularly and discuss their plans and members have more confidence in discussing their plans and monitor their own process.

### **STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

In the daily lives of the communities there is a clear cultural differentiation between men's and women's roles. This cultural value is very influential in the division of work between woman and man. The Women's Studies Encyclopedia describes gender as a cultural concept developed within the community to differentiate roles, behavior, mental and emotional characteristics between men and women. This distinction of gender roles often creates many forms of inequality both to men and women. Although in reality, gender inequalities such as subordination, stereotyping, marginalization, multiple burdens and violence are more often faced by women than by men.

The current legal system and bureaucracy in Indonesia have also increasingly marginalized women in accessing economic sources such as land, credit and markets. For example, the banking bureaucracy is such that married women are unable to get loans without their husbands' signatures. Likewise, in the business world, women who manage businesses cannot get a company tax number and a legal permit to expand their businesses without written approval from their husband, as the 'legally responsible party' of the family. The government's policies clearly do not offer gender equity and women are continuously marginalized by their lack of access to the economic sources mentioned above (Wiliam and Sutarti, in press).

---

<sup>8</sup> RT is the smallest administrative unit in a village

What commonly occurs in Jambi, as in other part of Indonesia, is that agricultural intensification programs are only focused on male farmers. In the main, agricultural information sessions held in villages only invite 'household heads' (a term long since synonymous with 'men') to offer information and assistance programs such as agriculture loans. Whereas, in fact nearly 90% of women in these two villages (Sungai Telang and Lubuk Kambing) state that they are the ones who work most in the rice fields and agricultural lands, whilst many of the men go to the forests to harvest timber for periods of time, leaving their fields. At those times, women are automatically responsible for all of the work, both in and outside of their households. If information only reaches the men, whilst women as the key actors are not directly or actively involved, how can the targets of agricultural programs possibly be achieved? (Wiliam and Sutarti, in press).

The division of work between men and women is not only applied individually but also in groups, consciously or unconsciously. For example the Family Welfare Movement (PKK) groups all consist of only women members and similarly the farmers group (*Kelompok Tani*) consists of men only. This gender division reinforces the idea that there should be some kinds of activities that only women would do and or only men would do.

In both research sites, division of roles also happens on individual as well as in the group. There is a strong tendency among the communities that group formed identically to particular sexes, often limit others to get involved in the group activity. For example women group limit men to be involved in their activities and this is also happening to the men's group.

Focusing on both women's and men's groups in the case of Sungai Telang and Lubuk Kambing, information gathered from observation and discussion revealed that women experience various types of gender inequity and it was also shown that people are still confused about the understanding of men's and women's roles. This understanding was derived from the biological characteristics between men and women lead to common perceptions and norms that have developed in society.

Men have a certain social function, which is different from women. In both villages, women's roles have been seen as synonymous with domestic tasks such as cleaning the house, cooking, rearing their children etc., which were not valued as productive work, but were instead seen as a 'wife's duty'. Their list of duties, which may run for 20 hours in a day, has put women in a weak position with regard to access to external information and economic resources with the result that these women also have a weak position in controlling, accessing and influencing decision-making processes both within the family and society. Both directly and indirectly, this has restricted development in the region and precluded women from participating effectively in the process. If the existing social structure gave more opportunities to women to participate in policy making processes, this would also ensure better use of more of the region's potential, hitherto 'buried' along with the voices of women.

The effectiveness of action approaches are founded on principles of empowerment, community control, and respect for local knowledge (Burns and Burns, 2004). Through facilitation processes, the target groups which consist of a diverse mix of women - poor people, ethnic minorities, elders, youths and others - encouraged to voice their full range of concerns through the steps of the PAR learning cycle. The use of different tools such as observation, joint walkthroughs, resource mapping, ranking exercise, group discussions, etc., not only quickly generate valid information and support analysis by stakeholders, but also are enjoyable for those involved. The processes of learning cycles require people's awareness to listen and appreciate others' opinions, and also help bring groups together, to build trust and mutual understanding.

Through the learning process of PAR, these women understood the need of shared learning in the process of planning, action, monitoring and reflection process by involving different stakeholders. To facilitate and encourage local communities to implement the monitoring framework and use it as a decision-making tool, they need to be engaged as key players and develop strong ownership over the development process (Hartanto et al., 2002). In order to make sure that the process that has been conducted will sustain itself, each group developed their own indicators of monitoring to make sure that they can tell when their activities are effective. These indicators also provide sanctions to those individuals who were not committed to the common goals. Everyone in the group has an important role to play to keep the group together. The group members work together to monitor the process in a way to make sure that the work is being done. The

reflection and planning discussions during the learning process are an important opportunity to bring everybody's views into fruitful discussions and shared learning among members of the group.

In one of the discussions conducted in the village, led by the village government people and customary leader, there was some argument regarding the number of women involved in the previous discussion process. One of the members of the discussion brought up this issue as they were trying to select a head of a hamlet in the village. They began to reflect on the process of the general election where women were given space and opportunity to contribute their voice in the discussion. Through the facilitation process, it was agreed by a number of people in the meeting and they agreed to involve women to bring out their views in future discussion.

During the process, we also learned that district and national societal policies and programs might have significant impacts on how women could better participate in the decision making and how people could collectively act in the pursuit of shared interests.

First, although there have been a national policy that require a wider participation of women in the House of Representatives, either at national, provincial and district level, we found no similar policies that provide a framework for village women to take part actively in the decision making process at this level. However, another regulation on the preparation for regional development plan seemed to offer a wider participation of stakeholders in forums that are conducted in stages.

Secondly, we found that periodic interventions made by Woman Empowerment Minister in two districts through gender workshops and gender mainstream programs have also to some extent influenced the way how women in the village become more informed of the latest development of regulations and aware of their roles in the development. Though there might be the downside of the top-down approach applied in the ministerial programs, we observed that continued efforts from the government institutions will lead to make woman participation in village decision making more effective.

Thirdly, we found that a district policy program, referred to as BUP or *Bantuan Usaha Produktif* that provides community groups with revolving funds and other assistances aimed to stimulate and enhance their productive efforts to generate income. Through our facilitation, a women group in Sungai Telang was found to express their interest in preparing an application for the funds.

Fourth, though it remains to be seen whether woman participation will be strengthened, the ministerial decree on timber utilization rights granted to individuals, cooperatives, groups and small-scale enterprises

P2WK (improvement program for estate crops in specific areas)-a district program providing revolving fund for local community groups.

P2WKSS/PKK (family welfare movement) – a district program on women empowerment effort that provides revolving fund.

## **DEVELOPMENT FROM COLLECTIVE ACTION**

### **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

One of the most important aspects of using PAR was to determine if collective action could help community members increase their confidence in themselves and their abilities, and make it possible for them to pursue collective action without the help of an outside facilitator in the future. While outputs such as land certificates obtained or ducks raised are easy to quantify, determining the success or failure of improving self-sufficiency are much harder to measure.

We looked at personal development using three different categories to see what characteristics of individuals that strengthen community collective action through: Personal Developments, Group Developments, and

Other Outputs. The first category, personal developments, that were witnessed was broken down into three categories. The categories were based on observation in the field. They are:

- 1) Comfort with meeting with members of the government
- 2) Personal Motivation
- 3) Personal Commitment

At each step of the PAR process, the facilitators continuously record their observations of the group members. These were recorded in a spread sheet format that could be added to during each step of the process. Personal motivation was, of course, different for different individuals. The facilitators observed general reaction arisen from the meeting or discussion, with specific examples where relevant.

### *Village Realities*

To better understand personal developments, we first explore the situation of the villagers before we began to work with the groups. In Sungai Telang, education levels are low. There is an elementary school near the village, which has grades one through six. While some students stop schooling before sixth grade, others generally completed the elementary school. Very few students continue on to higher level of education. Sungai Telang is also relatively isolated, though it is located only 53 km from Muara Bungo, the district capital, the only villagers who regularly visit are the members of the village government. Women visit the city less than men; many of the women we spoke to had never gone to the district capital, and had come to the sub-district capital, which is only 23 km away once or twice. Sungai Telang is also at the end of the road, and so there are not many cars or trucks that come through.

Lubuk Kambing is less isolated. Situated on a major road between Merlung and Simpang Niam, cars and trucks regularly pass through. The education system, however, is similar to that in s telang. There is primary education in the village, but there is no secondary school. Some children choose to continue school in the village of Sungai Rotan, approximately 12 kilometers away. Most, however, choose to stop school at sixth grade or below. In Suka Maju hamlet, home of the Kelompok Tani, this is particularly true, with only a small percentage reaching secondary education.

### *Comfort meeting with members of the district and sub-district government*

Until we began working in Sungai Telang and Lubuk Kambing, most of the village members had never gone to a government office to look for help. Interactions with officials occurred mainly when the latter, in particular those from the Agriculture and Forestry and Plantation departments, made a visit to the village. .

During the learning cycle, group members were found to agree on a plan to approach government officials for seeking information, financial support, and, the donation of seedlings and young animals. While the village facilitator participated in these meetings, the goal was for the work to actually be done by group members. At the beginning of the process, both facilitators found it extremely difficult to persuade group members to attend meetings. The villagers stated that they were shy, that they would not know what to say to government officials, and that it was the role of the head of the group to go. They also were dissuaded by the amount of time it would take to get to the nearest center of government (1.5 hours from Sungai Telang and 3.5 hours from Lubuk Kambing), and the implications that would have for their house and farm work. Transportation costs, which could have been an additional dissuading factor, were covered by the project.

As the PAR process continued, some group members became more comfortable with visiting government officials and more confidence with expressing their aspirations. A good example comes from the village facilitator's work with the farmer group in dusun Suka Maju, Lubuk Kambing. When the village facilitator began working with the group, their first planning session highlighted the need to get more information about the government assisted rubber sapling aid program (P2WK). This would require a trip to the sub-district level to meet with officials from the District Forestry and Estate Crops Services. The village facilitator expressed that he was not willing to go alone, and as this information was for the benefit of the group, he needed group members to ask the questions. After extensive discussion, the group leader was willing to go. During the next formal reflection and planning session, he reported back the results of their discussion. He also informed us that he had numerous informal discussions with group members about how the trip had not been too intimidating. For the next plan that required visits to governmental officials, many more people were interested.

Some important side notes: First, despite the repeated cycle of action research the villagers have passed through, women in the group were still very reluctant to go. One particularly self-confident woman expressed an interest, but could not because of her obligations as the local school teacher. Other women said that it was more proper for the men to go. It is also important to note that reluctance was most strong when asked to face the village head, with which there had been conflict in the past. No one was willing to meet with him, whatever the topic. There was more confidence in meeting with governmental officials that the group members did not know. The village facilitator also decided to ask the group members to go alone to speak to a government official. No one was willing to go, even when transportation costs would be covered

### *Personal Motivation*

Personal motivation was defined as the eagerness of each individual group member to pursue the goals of their particular campaign. Any collective action depends on the motivation of its group members to accomplish the sometimes onerous tasks that are needed to get the work done. Again, this varied significantly between different members of the group.

When we began the process, certain group members were the driving force behind beginning the collective action. These leaders were clearly definable, while it was equally clear who was unsure about whether or not they really wanted to be participating. An example of this comes from the village facilitator's work in Sungai Telang with the women's Gotong Royong group.

### *Personal Self Confidence*

Personal self confidence was defined as the confidence that each group member has in him or herself to fulfill their goals. The confidence that the goals that the group was pursuing could be attained is another important measure of the possible success of collective actions. This includes confidence that the goals themselves are attainable and confidence that the villagers themselves have the skills that are needed, including the power needed, to attain the goals.

This differed greatly among the groups, depending on the end goal of their collective action and the experience that they had with attempting this kind of work in the past. Some group members maintained high levels of confidence throughout the process, while others (including the village facilitator) had concern based on certain setbacks in the process. Some group members never thought this was possible, and said so vocally at meetings. To quote one member of the Suka Maju Farmer group in Lubuk Kambing, "I swear I will eat my hand if this works! There is no way!" Generally, however, there were phases where personal confidence was stronger or weaker. It can be generalized from the group members that confidence was highest during the action phase. This is possibly because that was when the project was visibly moving forward. During the reflection phase, there was a general lack of confidence either because the goals of the previous action were not reached or because they now had a better idea of the magnitude of the task before them. The same was true of the planning stage of the PAR process.

The level of confidence was also dependant on outside factors. The Dasawisma- Semangka in Lubuk Kambing had very little confidence in selling cakes because they could not clearly see where they would find a market to buy them. The group trying to get land certificates in Sungai Telang, however, maintained higher levels of confidence because many of the group members had worked with the government before and had experience. The men also generally had more personal confidence than the women, when it came to their own work. As the process has continued, so far with few concrete objectives achieved, there has been a general lack of confidence that any of the goals

## GROUP DEVELOPMENT

### *Trust to reach common goals*

In the case of Sungai telang, based on our observation, several group members believe that they will be able to reach their common goals if they act together or collectively. The sense of trust started to build within the

group as it was shown that some of the members felt optimistic about reaching their common goals as the process continue, however there are some of the group members still felt pessimistic towards the achievement of the common goals.

#### *Trust and leadership;*

Belief or a trust of the group's members towards a figure of a leader was shown well at the beginning of our facilitation, it also appears that the groups members are strongly believe the group leader. However, as the learning process continues some members begin to disbelieve the group leader. There is an assumption that social jealousy become the reason of this disbelieve.

#### *Thrust within group members*

At the beginning of the process of facilitation, it shown that all the members have trust among each other member of the team but then the later came out as the jealousy arose as because some people have confident to speak in public especially those who able to express their ideas or thoughts.

### COMMUNITY-WIDE DEVELOPMENT

There have been some changes in ways of thinking on the part of community members involved in the PAR process . The community group began to learn to make plans and go through the learning process by implementing the plans and reflecting on the actions taken. In Sungai Telang, the emerging issue arose when community expressed their needs of a high school for their children in the village. One of the concerns related to the need to get land where the school will be built, certified. The questions about what land certification is all about have triggered community to get more information on the possibility of getting their private land certified. This has been initiated by the farmer group in the village. They mentioned the reason why they interested in the certification issuance on their land is because the amount of land available in the village is becoming less and less, meanwhile they must inherit their lands to their children. "Many young people do not have lands, therefore they must open new land, often they are so far away and difficult to reach" said one of the community member when facilitator had an informal chat during a community meeting in the village.

After a series of visit made by members of community and the village facilitator to the district agencies to find further information on the procedure for land certification and requirements to be fulfilled, it was then agreed to hold a village meeting to get clearer ideas of what land certificate is. The meeting took place and was attended by representatives from the district agencies such as the national land agency (*BPN*), forestry agency (*Dishutbun*), regional planning agency (*BAPPEDA*) and community of Sungai Telang, both men and women. The process also attracted other community members from neighboring villages who interested to know more information on the land certification.

The process of discussion went well, and many questions ranging from the very basic issues such as what is certificate to more complicated ones, the procedure and price for getting the lands certified were responded by relevant extension workers. Villagers were updated of recent policies and regulations on lands. Community felt the benefit of this discussion and considered it as a rare opportunity to clarify matters related to land ownerships. This process has been followed up by the group sending a proposal for mass land-certification through Agrarian National Program (*PRONA*). The process is still on going at present.

### LESSONS LEARNED

The research has confirmed the ealier studies's findings that PAR approach has offerred a suitable tool to encourage commonly excluded groups such as women and the marginalized, to speak out and become confidence with expressing their opinions and be courageous in interaction with other stakeholders.

In order to avoid elite capture, it is not enough to have current vehicles for stakeholder participation in decision making, most of which are through formal mechanism. Continued interaction among stakeholders should be made through facilitated meetings to deliberate issues on governance systems and options for preventing the elite from taking advantage for their own interests.

Communities started to become more critical of their own leadership. One of the examples became evident when the head of the village kept stalling about signing a letter of application to be submitted to the district government for grants to the community under improvement program for estate crops in specific areas. The community showed a greater recognition and displeasure with the village head's inappropriate behaviour than they would have previously, and tried various means to overcome the problem--from simple nagging, to complaints at the next governmental level, to a complaint to the district head.

Women are often marginalized and separated from community and district decision making. This is partially due to their lack of access to information and to their packed schedule of daily work. The community appreciated the project's information sharing and group discussions about gender roles.

There is sometimes a conflict between governmental systems of organizing women's lives and traditional systems. This often leads to conflict or a lack of buy-in from other women when, for instance, the village head's wife tries to run things (as she is in fact supposed to according to the governmental system). For instance, in Lubuk Kambing, the village head's wife selected members from various neighbourhoods to work together, ignoring the considerable distances between their homes and resulting difficulties meeting. In this case, the women first grumbled, and then decided (with CAPRi encouragement) to talk directly with her. The women decided to group by neighbourhood, which has been successful so far. However, in some cases, this kind of problem can completely stop all progress toward the group's goals.

**REFERENCES:**

- Andersson, K.P. Gibson, C.C. and Lehouq, F. 2004. The Politics of Decentralized Natural Resource Governance. PS online [www.apsanet.org](http://www.apsanet.org)
- Bruns, B. and Bruns, P.C. 2004. Strengthening Collective Action. Collective Action and Property Rights for Sustainable Development, ed. R.S. Meinzen-Dick and M. Di Gregorio, Brief 15 of 16. International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
- Bungo District Forestry Service, 2005. Report
- Castellanet, C. and Jordan, C.F. 2002. Participatory Action Research in Natural Resource Management. A critique of the Method Based on Five Years' Experience in TransamaZonica Region of Brazil. Taylor and Francis. New York 1001. [www.taylorandfrancis.com](http://www.taylorandfrancis.com)
- Di Gregorio, Monica, Konrad Hagedorn, Michael Kirk, Benedict Korf, Nancy McCarthy, Ruth Meizen-Dick, Brent Swallow. 2004. The role of Property Rights and Collective Action for Poverty Reduction. Paper prepares for EDGI-WIDER conference on Unlocking Human Potential: Linking Informal and Formal Sectors, 17/18 September 2004, Helsinki, Finland.
- Hartanto, H. Lorenzo, M.C.B. and Frio, A.L. 2002. Collective Action and Learning in Developing a Local Monitoring System. *International Forestry Review* 4 (3): 184 -195
- ILO, 2002. International Labor Organization (ILO). June 2002. [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)
- Kemmis, S. and McTaggart, R. 1988. *The Action Research Planner*, Geelong, Victoria: Deakin University Press.
- Marshall, G. 1998. *A Dictionary of Sociology*. Oxford University Press, New York.
- McCutchen, G and Jung, B. 1990. Alternative Perspectives on Action Research. *Theory into Practice*, 29(3).
- Meizen-Dick, R. Pradhan, R. and Di Gregorio, M. 2004. Understanding Property Rights. Collective Action and Property Rights for Sustainable Development, ed. R.S. Meinzen-Dick and M. Di Gregorio, Brief 3 of 16. International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
- Meizen-Dick, R. and Di Gregorio, M. 2004. Overview. Collective Action and Property Rights for Sustainable Development, ed. R.S. Meinzen-Dick and M. Di Gregorio, Brief 1 of 16. International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
- Nitti, R. and B. Jahiya. 2004. Community-Driven Development in Urban Upgrading, *Social Development Notes*, 85 (2004) 1-6.
- Ostrom, E. 2004. Understanding Collective Action. Collective Action and Property Rights for Sustainable Development, ed. R.S. Meinzen-Dick and M. Di Gregorio, Brief 2 of 16. International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
- William, D and Sutarti, N. (in pres). Adil Gender: Mengungkap Realitas Perempuan Jambi. Policy Brief (Forthcoming). Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). Bogor. Indonesia

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

This study was funded by CGIAR System-wide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights (CAPRI). The authors would like to thank Carol Colfer and Heru Komarudin for their valuable inputs during conceptualization and finalization of this paper.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Bogor, Indonesia

CIFOR, PO Box 6596 JKPWB, Jakarta, Indonesia.

Telephone: +62 251 622 622 Fax: +62 251 622 100

Email: [y.siagian@cgiar.org](mailto:y.siagian@cgiar.org); [brihannala@gmail.com](mailto:brihannala@gmail.com); [yent\\_rizal@yahoo.com](mailto:yent_rizal@yahoo.com); [onirvasydlen@yahoo.com](mailto:onirvasydlen@yahoo.com)