



PRESS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, 15 March 2007

# ***UNDP Seeks Partners for USD1M Initiative to Uplift Indigenous Communities***

**Kuala Lumpur, 15 March 2007** – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) of Malaysia is looking for partners for an initiative which seeks to improve the lives of local indigenous communities through community forestry.

“We are seeking partnerships with financial and technical support from multi-stakeholders to ensure the continuation of a small grants programme targeting forest-based indigenous communities,” said Dr Richard Leete, the Resident Representative of UNDP Malaysia.

The new initiative proposed by UNDP aims to build on the experience of its ongoing ‘Small Grants Programme for Operations to Promote Tropical Forests’ (SGP PTF), which is funded by the European Commission (EC).

“UNDP is committed to sustain and replicate the innovations in community forestry developed under SGP PTF through the new initiative,” said Dr Richard Leete.

He said that the overall objective is to reduce hardcore poverty among the forest-dependent indigenous communities by strengthening the link between economic activities and sustainable forest use and management.

“We also hope to develop community organizations to be efficient project managers who are proactive and capable of engaging in multi-stakeholder dialogues,” he said.

UNDP estimates the cost of the initiative at RM3.5 million (USD 1 million) for a period of 27 months, from September 2007 to December 2009.

Of this total amount, a minimum of 70 per cent (RM2.45 million) would be disbursed as grants for community projects.

Financial support may be contributed as part of a pooled funding arrangement to be managed by UNDP and/or for the sustainability of individual ongoing projects.

Project funds would be managed according to UNDP’s global standards of transparency with full accountability, regular monitoring and evaluation.

The management of the initiative would be guided by a national committee including representatives from the government, civil society, private sector and academia.

Interested parties can contact UNDP Programme Manager Ginny Ng at 03-20915192 or [ginny.ng@undp.org](mailto:ginny.ng@undp.org).

### **About SGP PTF**

In Malaysia, SGP PTF was established with the overall objective of promoting sustainable forest management by local stakeholders.

SGP PTF aims to alleviate the lives of the poor who are dependent on the forests, by strengthening the link between economic enterprise and sustainable forest use and management.

Existing projects under SGP PTF support activities that encourage capacity building in community forestry and enhance the indigenous communities' ability to upgrade their lives.

The strategies identified by the communities were specific to their needs and include activities such as conservation, ecotourism, handicrafts, agroforestry, natural resource management and the revival of traditional knowledge.

**NOTE TO EDITOR**

*UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners. Its current priority is to help all countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.*

*To read more about the work of UNDP in Malaysia, please visit our website at [www.undp.org.my](http://www.undp.org.my)*

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