Samling’s work with the community is a continuing legacy of more than 15 years, and to this day, we continue to take on the challenge of weaving Corporate Responsibility practices into our business. We are conscious that Samling’s continued success and viable growth must go hand-in-hand with our role as neighbours to communities and the wider society where we operate in.

Sarawak is home to a rich diversity of indigenous people. The Kenyah, Kelabit, Kayan, Iban, Penan, Punan, Lun Bawang and many other tribes in Sarawak live within the areas of our operations. We have a long tradition of actively working with the indigenous people to integrate and accommodate their community activities within our operations. Our approach to Corporate Responsibility for the local communities in Sarawak broadly comprises:

**Community Assistance : Providing for basic needs**
We make it a point to regularly engage in dialogue with local indigenous communities before we start any operations in their area to promote greater understanding. These fact-finding dialogues help us understand and assess their needs better before we invite them to participate in our Community Assistance Programme.

The villages participating in our Community Assistance Programme benefit from projects that provide electricity, clean water supply and building materials for their homes, schools and places of worship. Requests are also often made for the unexpected repair of bridges, clearing of roads from land slips, maintaining the water pipes and electrical wiring in villages, and a host of other contributions to help out in emergencies.

Donations are given during festive seasons, especially Christmas to help make a little difference in their celebration.

**Community Skills Programmes : Encouraging sustainable livelihoods**
Our Community Skills Programmes are about helping the communities to create long-term, self-reliant, economically vibrant communities in the long-term. Once we have helped communities secure the basic needs, we assist with skill development programmes to encourage and promote a sustainable livelihood.

We work together with the communities and local government agencies on agricultural initiatives such as building nurseries, organising talks and site visits, procuring seedlings, farming vegetables, growing fruit trees, tending fish ponds and planting wet paddy. With these acquired skills and tools in place, communities gradually acquire the ability to share in the fruits of their labour and trade with neighbouring communities.

A number of pilot projects for agriculture and coffee planting are already underway. When fully developed, these programmes will enable communities to become self-supporting even when timber companies no longer operate alongside them.

**Infrastructure : Connecting communities**
Forest lands and rivers are intricate and often challenging terrain. Travel is limited or avoided altogether given the hours, days and sometimes weeks to get from one village to another.

The bridges and road network we use for our operations also provide access to the communities within the areas of our operations. Over the years we have also constructed feeder roads to some villages, schools, and other parts of the forest, enabling easier and more convenient travelling for community members.

With better connection, community members can use these roads for access to medical treatment, to transport and sell their produce to nearby communities or to us, enhancing their self-reliance.

This network of access roads, built and maintained for the benefit of the communities, continues to be one of the most essential forms of assistance that we provide.

**Scholarship and Bursary Programme : Nurturing Future Leaders**
To enrich the talent and skills force in the countries in which we operate, we grant annual scholarships to students with outstanding academic credentials and leadership potential.

Since the scholarship programme began in Malaysia in 2000, we have provided over RM800,000 to about 36 students attending both local and foreign universities.

This edition of Community Snapshots brings you up to date on some of the community development programmes and projects that Samling has worked on recently. Happy reading!
Janji, a community skills programme supported by Samling Global made its debut against a backdrop of rhythmic jazz music and a splendid view of the South China Sea during the Miri International Jazz Festival held on 11 to 12 May 2007.

Themed “Janji: Our Promise for Tomorrow”, this community development initiative aims to empower local indigenous communities to develop self-reliant and self-sufficiency living by working with them to promote and market traditional handicrafts made by these communities.

“We aim to work with these communities and guide them towards enhancing the quality of their products. This will lead to better acceptance by a wider market and open up opportunities for improved income and standard of living for them,” said Kartini Illias, the founder and coordinator of Janji.

According to Kartini, the Janji initiative was not just about buying and selling but more importantly involved motivation, guidance and sharing of best practices with the local communities to bring about overall improvement in the process of producing handicrafts.

Kartini also said that there is already a Janji sales outlet in Suria KLCC, Kuala Lumpur promoting and selling works of Malaysian art, which includes handicrafts from the various indigenous communities of Sarawak.

Samling Global brought in seven Janji artisans, who hail from the villages deep in the interiors of Ulu Baram region of Sarawak to participate at the event.

The scene at the Janji corner was a hive of activity and vibrant colours. On display was a rich kaleidoscope of exquisitely crafted handicraft items such as beadwork, sunhats, mats and baskets that are characteristic of the Kenyah, Kelabit and Penan tribes. There was also a live demonstration of select crafts for the benefit of visitors.

Spokesperson for the seven artisans, Victoria Mujan Nyagok from Uma Aging, Belaga said she was happy and proud to be involved in the Janji initiative.

“This will help us determine the quality of our work that will meet market requirements. We are thankful to Janji for providing us this support which will go a long way in helping us improve the quality of our work.”

“Janji also had a surprise visitor in the form of YB Dato Sri Wong Soon Koh, Minister for Urban Development and Tourism who stopped by during the handicraft demonstration. He was impressed with the Janji initiative and its role in supporting the local handicraft industry.

Victoria added that before this, they encountered the problem of effective marketing which was a critical factor in determining the level of their income.

“We hope to work with Janji to improve the quality of our products and reach a wider market,” she said.

A representative of the local community, Zain Rocky, a Penan from Long Benalih was also appreciative of the Janji initiative. He said the local communities are hard-working and wanted progress in line with the other communities.

“Opportunities like Janji will certainly help our people increase their productivity hence, opening up avenues to earn better income and lead better lives.”

Samling’s employees also took the opportunity to donate clothes and toys to the Long Main communities.

Kartini Illias visited Ulu Baram on 14 August 2007 with a big entourage of photographers to announce the Janji initiative, supported by Samling, to the local indigenous communities in Ulu Baram area. She visited Long Main, a Penan village, and Long Semiyang, a Kenyah village. Kartini received a warm welcome at both villages. More than a dozen villagers in Long Semiyang came out to showcase their handicraft products and did a live demonstration of the art of making handicrafts.

Janji to promote BARAM NATIVE HANDICRAFTS

Kartini Illias in a discussion with the indigenous community of Long Main on the launching of Janji initiative.
Engaging local communities in Sarawak

Intent
We aim to maintain effective, transparent and open communication and consultation with our stakeholders associated with the Company’s activities.

Background
There are local indigenous communities who live in the areas where we operate. Amongst those are the Kelabit, Kenyah, Iban, Punan, Penan, Lun Bawang, Kayan, Saban, Berawan and others. Majority of these communities have settled into villages in the forestland and they live in longhouses and practise subsistence farming and husbandry. The younger generation generally does not spend much time in their villages as they have to pursue education in neighbouring villages or work in the cities. Many of them also work in timber companies. A minority group is semi-nomadic, mostly from the Penan indigenous group. They have also settled into villages but at the same time, they still go into the forest to forage and harvest their non-timber forest products.

HOW WE ENGAGE

1. Fact finding dialogues We have a long tradition of engaging with different groups of indigenous communities. Before we enter to operate in any approved area in the forestland, we will identify the indigenous communities who live within the area. Our Community Affairs Officers and authorised representatives will meet with the Headman and his villagers to inform them of our impending operations and road construction for our timber operations. It is not necessary to relocate the communities as we set aside the village area, its surrounding forest areas and their farming land, water catchment areas and river buffer zones, from our timber operations. Due to the nature of our activities, we always consult the local villages before beginning operations. The communities have the freedom to continue their daily activities in the forest.

2. Negotiation After fact-finding dialogues, we will negotiate with the villages so that they agree with our impending operations within their areas of influence. Amongst those that will be discussed are ways to minimise the impact of our timber operations on their living conditions and environment. There will be series of meetings, sometimes held in the villages or in our office in Miri. When we have the consensus from the villages, we will proceed to draft the goodwill agreement.

If there is no agreement, we will not enter to operate in their area of influence and continue with negotiation.

3. Signing of agreement The goodwill agreement will include the agreed community assistance and contributions to the indigenous communities during the duration of our operations. This is targeted to improve their living conditions and provide them with easier and more comfortable lives. We provide water piping and maintenance and build water dams so that they can get clean water source. We provide generator sets, wiring and maintenance so that they can get electricity. We provide building materials so that they can build their homes. We build toilets and their sewerage system and we also give festive and annual donations to the villagers.

4. Execution Our Community Affairs Officers and their team members will execute and monitor the assistance to be provided. They will also visit them from time to time to have their feedback and provide ad-hoc assistance upon request, such as transporting school children who live in very remote villages, levelling of land for their use, painting and repainting of their buildings.

Samling does not impose any assistance to the local villagers, instead villages are invited to participate. Over and above the community assistance programme, we also select some settled communities for our Community Skills Programme. The aim is to empower the indigenous communities to eradicate ‘slash and burn’ practices for subsistence farming, and instead to adopt self-reliant and self-sufficient living. Thus, they too will be able to enjoy more than just the basic living necessities of everyday life.
It was a journey of epic proportions for five city slickers. A journey that began at the end of the road access to Long Benalih with our backpacks, carrying three days’ worth of supplies firmly strapped on our shoulders. The two-hour downhill trek to Long Benalih was a test of mental and physical endurance, one that was wrought with negotiating steep, slippery and narrow jungle trails, balancing precariously on logs to cross a stream, sliding down muddy slopes, falling into the mud, sitting in a leaky boat, outrunning a storm, and getting bitten by leeches and sand flies.

But, this was a journey made to fulfil a promise. A promise that Kartini Illias, the founder of Janji made to come back and to follow-up with the artisans after announcing the initiative in August 2007. This mission also marks a milestone – it is our first foray into Long Benalih to promote Janji.

Word travelled fast. The artisans in Long Benalih were steadfast in their preparations to meet the team. They gathered at the village headman’s house, bringing along with them arts and crafts produce to show Kartini who later purchased countless ‘Jong’ bangles (Penan bangles) from them for the Janji outlet in KLCC.

Our hike through the jungle’s muddy path underscore the hardships of villagers living in Long Benalih, Long Main and other smaller remote villages around the area. There is an underlying need for accessibility, for the children to get to school easier, for faster medical response, for connecting the forest communities, for exposure, and for development. Samling hopes initiatives like Janji is a small step towards opening up these communities to the outside world, while providing them a source of sustainable income.

Meeting the WOMENFOLK behind Janji

Norina
39, Long Benalih
Norina’s daily routine is to help her husband with subsistence farming.

“This is the first time that we have sold our ‘Jong’ bangles in bulk. I usually sell them in small quantities to the few and far between tourists who drop by the village. I’m looking forward to the regular source of income that this enterprise will provide me. I can produce the bangles to pass time while waiting for the paddy to grow in November and December.”

Molly Melai
40, Long Lellang
Molly produces baskets, mats and baskets for Janji. She also works as a teacher in a pre-school that Samling helped set up.

“I’m glad that we don’t need to find a market to sell our handicrafts items and that Janji comes to us directly. Going to bigger towns like Miri and Marudi is not feasible because of the high cost of transportation and there is no ready distribution channel to market our products.”

Lucy Selalang
38, Long Lellang
Lucy is excited about introducing indigenous handicraft to the world through the Janji shop.

“I used to weave these baskets as gifts to friends. Before Janji, there were no means to sell my baskets. Now that there is a demand for our craft, I will start diversifying by making mats as well!”

Meet the WOMENFOLK behind Janji

Spreading Christmas joy. Teresa distributing stationery and food items to the children in Long Benalih.

Long Benalih ladies listening intently to Kartini giving them a brief to produce different varieties of handicraft items for her next trip.
Long Main produces Penan Graduates

They are fans of American rock bands, My Chemical Romance and Nirvana. Like any typical Malaysian youths, they sport edgy hairstyles and sport outfits Adidas and Levi’s. Meet Paul John, 22 and Roland Allen, 21 from Long Main, a Penan village in Ulu Baram, located in the heart of the Sarawak rainforest.

Paul is a primary school teacher. He teaches Geography and Bahasa Malaysia in a primary school in Long Seridan. Roland is currently pursuing a degree in communications in University of Malaysia Sarawak in Kuching under Samling’s Scholarship Programme.

“My ambition is to be a journalist. I want to see the world,” Roland said when asked why he chose his field of study. He graduates in 2010.

“Teaching is just a temporary job for me. I hope to further my studies,” said Paul, who also works as a tour guide in Mulu Caves.

Both Paul and Roland represent a new generation of Penans who believe that education is an agent of change for the development of their community. “It is critical for our community to catch up with the economic development that is happening outside the village so we don’t get left behind further,” said Paul.

Education gives Penan youths like Paul and Roland a head start in life. With brighter career opportunities afforded by an education, they will be able to move on to a brighter future instead of doing odd jobs.

Paul and Roland are among the beneficiaries of Samling’s bursary scheme which provides financial assistance for students’ tuition fees, pocket money and air fare to travel home during the semester holidays.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN LONG MAIN

A relatively new settlement, Long Main has come a long way since it was founded in the 1990s. With a population of over 70, the former hunter-gatherers settled in this satellite community so their children could attend primary school located in the Long Lellang village nearby.

The village bears the achievement of being the first village to receive 24-hour electricity in the Ulu Baram region outside of Marudi and Long Lama that is attributed to the electrification project by Samling. The recent years have seen the community moving from practising subsistence agriculture to wet paddy-planting, crop-growing, and animal husbandry.
December 2007

Shortening the long march back to school

With assistance from Samling and access to logging roads, 16 children from remote villages of the Ulu Baram region in Sarawak were able to return to school in three days, half the time they used to take. Until two years ago, going back to school in Bario entailed a six-day trek in the forest. The Company provided road and boat transportation, accommodation and food to alleviate the gruelling 142 km long journey. The children are from the villages of Long Main, Long Lellang and Long Benalih.

One of the journeys. Children and parents at Camp Kelesa en route to S.M.K. Bario.

A league of their own:
Football brings Ulu Baram youths together

November 2007 saw a very special event in Long San village. For the first time in forest village history, more than 50 youths from five villages in the Ulu Baram region of Sarawak came together for the inaugural Long San Cup football tournament.

The Penan, Kayan, Kelabit and Kenyah youths from villages of Long Main, Long Sait, Long Lellang, Long Benalih and Long Main trooped to Long San to celebrate the culturally diversified event.

The goodies sponsored by Samling such as refreshments, trophies and brand new football attire ensured the youths had a wonderful time. Transportation and accommodation were provided for the teams travelling from distant villages.

30 August 2007

SAMLING DONATES NEW WHEELS TO MALAYSIAN RED CROSS
Samling recently donated an ambulance to the Miri Chapter of the Malaysian Red Cross Society (MRCS). The ambulance was handed over by Mr. Troy Yaw, the Property Director of Samling Strategic Corporation to the chapter chairman and Deputy Chief Minister, Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Amar Dr. Chan Hong Nam.

18 & 19 November 2007
RURAL MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN LONG URUN
Samling recently joined forces with the Lions Club of Miri to run a rural medical assistance project for the primarily Penan community of Long Urun. The two-day event was held at Tamex Timber’s Long Urun Camp. It was a busy day for the health team, all volunteers, offering free medical services such as general health, dental and eye checks, blood tests and PAP smears for the 600 people who turned up. Apart from the health screening, milk powder, clothing and food were also donated.

11 December 2007
SAMLING CHIPS IN RM20,000 TO REBUILD TEMPLE
A recent fire broke out at the Chinese Tua Pek Kong temple in Miri, destroying the venerable place of worship. Samling donated RM20,000 to aid the rebuilding effort through the Miri Chinese Charitable Trust Board (MCCTB).

Mr. Soo Mei Kong (fourth from right), Adviser, handing over the cheque to Mr. Chia Chan Shin, the Chairman of MCCTB.
November 2008

Samling Helps Flood Victims in Baram

MIRI: Samling teamed up with Mercy Malaysia to reach out to victims of the flood that devastated villages in the Baram district in Sarawak recently.

About 35 longhouses in Baram district including those from Kampung Padang Kerbau, Kampung Narum and Kampung Dagang Marudi were affected by massive floods following heavy downpour in the area, leaving many homeless and in need of urgent food supplies.

Samling donated RM10,000 worth of emergency food relief items to the flood victims. Food items such as rice, cooking oil and tinned food were packed and dispatched to the villages by the Mercy Malaysia team together with Samling’s Marudi camp manager, Lau Hieng Kee.

April 2008

The colours of Tamu in CTB

The scene outside Samling’s Centre Base Camp (CTB) in Baram was a spontaneous hustle of marketing activities. The word ‘Tamu’ which means “meeting place” are open markets ubiquitous among the natives of Sabah and Sarawak where they gather to buy and sell or barter farm produce, handicrafts, traditional ware and food items.

The CTB Tamu, a wooden shed constructed outside the gates of the CTB is a CR project initiated by the Baram upstream team. The ‘tamu’ benefits more nine villages within a 72km radius of its vicinity, enabling local communities to buy and sell local market produce such as vegetables and fruits, providing them a source a regular income.

“Samling cares for the communities. We are glad that we can help in some ways together with Mercy Malaysia,” said Mr Lau, who represented the company during the handing over of donations to the village headmen.

23 October 2007

NEW FACELIFT FOR THE RONALD MCDONALD’S HOUSE AT HUKM

The newly-renovated Ronald McDonald’s House located on the grounds of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Hospital (HUKM) was officially reopened by the Director of HUKM, Y. Bhg. Prof. Dato’ Dr. Mohamad Abdul Razak together with the President of Ronald McDonald’s Children’s Charities Fund of Malaysia (RMCC), Puan Fadillah Yakin.

Samling sponsored the raw materials of the home in the form of wooden flooring. The Ronald McDonald’s House serves as a home away from home especially for family members of children undergoing treatment at HUKM. The 19-bedroom house has accommodated more than 250 families since its inception in 2001.

November 2008

Samling Helps Flood Victims in Baram

MIRI: Samling teamed up with Mercy Malaysia to reach out to victims of the flood that devastated villages in the Baram district in Sarawak recently.

About 35 longhouses in Baram district including those from Kampung Padang Kerbau, Kampung Narum and Kampung Dagang Marudi were affected by massive floods following heavy downpour in the area, leaving many homeless and in need of urgent food supplies.

Samling donated RM10,000 worth of emergency food relief items to the flood victims. Food items such as rice, cooking oil and tinned food were packed and dispatched to the villages by the Mercy Malaysia team together with Samling’s Marudi camp manager, Lau Hieng Kee.

April 2008

The colours of Tamu in CTB

The scene outside Samling’s Centre Base Camp (CTB) in Baram was a spontaneous hustle of marketing activities. The word ‘Tamu’ which means “meeting place” are open markets ubiquitous among the natives of Sabah and Sarawak where they gather to buy and sell or barter farm produce, handicrafts, traditional ware and food items.

The CTB Tamu, a wooden shed constructed outside the gates of the CTB is a CR project initiated by the Baram upstream team. The ‘tamu’ benefits more nine villages within a 72km radius of its vicinity, enabling local communities to buy and sell local market produce such as vegetables and fruits, providing them a source a regular income.

“Samling cares for the communities. We are glad that we can help in some ways together with Mercy Malaysia,” said Mr Lau, who represented the company during the handing over of donations to the village headmen.

23 October 2007

NEW FACELIFT FOR THE RONALD MCDONALD’S HOUSE AT HUKM

The newly-renovated Ronald McDonald’s House located on the grounds of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Hospital (HUKM) was officially reopened by the Director of HUKM, Y. Bhg. Prof. Dato’ Dr. Mohamad Abdul Razak together with the President of Ronald McDonald’s Children’s Charities Fund of Malaysia (RMCC), Puan Fadillah Yakin.

Samling sponsored the raw materials of the home in the form of wooden flooring. The Ronald McDonald’s House serves as a home away from home especially for family members of children undergoing treatment at HUKM. The 19-bedroom house has accommodated more than 250 families since its inception in 2001.
The Penan people with their nomadic past and living in settlements in the far reaches of the Sarawak rainforest are hampered by logistic and financial constraints that has made applying for identity cards and birth certificates almost impossible.

Samling collaborated with the Forest Department and National Registration Department, International Tropical Timber Organisation in Bario and Long Sait in Ulu Baram to facilitate an identity card registration exercise. More than 200 Penans, with some of them trekking for days across rugged terrains made trip to the registration venues which were held at the ranger’s station in Bario and the church in Long Sait respectively.

Samling sponsored and provided road and boat transportation to ferry the people from different Penan villages to get to the registration venue.

In conjunction with the new school term, 81 delighted primary school children in SK Long Lellang received new sets of uniforms from Samling.

The village headman of Long Lellang, Joseph Wan Raja handed over two sets of uniforms to each child on behalf of the company. This contribution aims to alleviate the parents’ financial burden in a small way as most of the children there come from underprivileged backgrounds.

It is also hoped that the new uniforms will help boost the children’s confidence and give them more reasons to go to school. In July, a donation was also made to enable teaching aids to be purchased for the Sunday School in Long Lellang.

Our aim is to continue helping the school-going children and school’s management with assistance like these so they would be able to focus their energy on education.

SK Long Lellang is one of the two schools located in the Samling’s concession. Children from the surrounding Penan villages of Long Kepang, Long Main, Long Sabai, Long Pengaran, Long Keramu, Ba’ Buboi and Long Sait also attend the school because of its central location.

The preschool programme is aimed at preparing these kids for Primary 1 in later years so they do not get left behind their peers in class. Lessons are usually held in the pastor’s house or in the village church. A typical lesson is comprised of teaching the children the basic skill of reading, writing and counting, along with colouring and singing activities.

Mercy Malaysia flew in a volunteer to assist with the preschool’s curriculum and teachers’ training. Teachers, usually the pastors, were briefed on how to conduct classes, plan for each lesson and make teaching aids. Children’s discipline, punctuality, personal hygiene and cleanliness were also emphasised.

Samling supplies stationery and books for learning and colouring lessons annually. Milk and biscuits are contributed monthly to ensure that children stay nourished in school. Samling also donates hygiene supplies and maintains the monthly cost of operating the preschools.

"It is in preschools that children learn many languages, social and practical skills that will benefit them immediately and also enhance their chances for future achievement. We hope that this programme will help lay the foundation for these kids for a brighter future," said James Ho, Samling’s Chief Operation Officer.

In the village of Long Lellang, the mid-morning silence was broken by the sounds of children singing in Pastor Lah Deng’s home while at the same time in Long Main, children can be heard reciting their ABCs excitedly.

Together with the other villages of Ba’Mubui, Long Sepigen, Long Sait, Long Benalih and Long Kepang in the Ulu Baram region, children aged between three to seven are beneficiaries of a pre-school programme jointly initiated by the Malaysian Medical Relief Society (Mercy Malaysia) and Samling.

This project came to fruition to address the lack of, or nonexistent elementary educational facilities in these remote settlements deep in the Sarawak rainforest. The nearest kindergarten in a more established village could mean a full or a few day’s walk in the forest, discouraging parents to send these children to school.

The nearest kindergarden in a more established village could mean a full or a few day’s walk in the forest, discouraging parents to send these children to school.

In conjunction with the new school term, 81 delighted primary school children in SK Long Lellang received new sets of uniforms from Samling.

The village headman of Long Lellang, Joseph Wan Raja handed over two sets of uniforms to each child on behalf of the company. This contribution aims to alleviate the parents’ financial burden in a small way as most of the children there come from underprivileged backgrounds.

It is also hoped that the new uniforms will help boost the children’s confidence and give them more reasons to go to school. In July, a donation was also made to enable teaching aids to be purchased for the Sunday School in Long Lellang.

Our aim is to continue helping the school-going children and school’s management with assistance like these so they would be able to focus their energy on education.

SK Long Lellang is one of the two schools located in the Samling’s concession. Children from the surrounding Penan villages of Long Kepang, Long Main, Long Sabai, Long Pengaran, Long Keramu, Ba’ Buboi and Long Sait also attend the school because of its central location.

The preschool programme is aimed at preparing these kids for Primary 1 in later years so they do not get left behind their peers in class. Lessons are usually held in the pastor’s house or in the village church. A typical lesson is comprised of teaching the children the basic skill of reading, writing and counting, along with colouring and singing activities.

Mercy Malaysia flew in a volunteer to assist with the preschool’s curriculum and teachers’ training. Teachers, usually the pastors, were briefed on how to conduct classes, plan for each lesson and make teaching aids. Children’s discipline, punctuality, personal hygiene and cleanliness were also emphasised.

Samling supplies stationery and books for learning and colouring lessons annually. Milk and biscuits are contributed monthly to ensure that children stay nourished in school. Samling also donates hygiene supplies and maintains the monthly cost of operating the preschools.

"It is in preschools that children learn many languages, social and practical skills that will benefit them immediately and also enhance their chances for future achievement. We hope that this programme will help lay the foundation for these kids for a brighter future," said James Ho, Samling’s Chief Operation Officer.

In the village of Long Lellang, the mid-morning silence was broken by the sounds of children singing in Pastor Lah Deng’s home while at the same time in Long Main, children can be heard reciting their ABCs excitedly.

Together with the other villages of Ba’Mubui, Long Sepigen, Long Sait, Long Benalih and Long Kepang in the Ulu Baram region, children aged between three to seven are beneficiaries of a pre-school programme jointly initiated by the Malaysian Medical Relief Society (Mercy Malaysia) and Samling.

This project came to fruition to address the lack of, or nonexistent elementary educational facilities in these remote settlements deep in the Sarawak rainforest. The nearest kindergarten in a more established village could mean a full or a few day’s walk in the forest, discouraging parents to send these children to school.

In the village of Long Lellang, the mid-morning silence was broken by the sounds of children singing in Pastor Lah Deng’s home while at the same time in Long Main, children can be heard reciting their ABCs excitedly.

Together with the other villages of Ba’Mubui, Long Sepigen, Long Sait, Long Benalih and Long Kepang in the Ulu Baram region, children aged between three to seven are beneficiaries of a pre-school programme jointly initiated by the Malaysian Medical Relief Society (Mercy Malaysia) and Samling.

This project came to fruition to address the lack of, or nonexistent elementary educational facilities in these remote settlements deep in the Sarawak rainforest. The nearest kindergarten in a more established village could mean a full or a few day’s walk in the forest, discouraging parents to send these children to school.
February 2008
Visit to Miri Old Folks Home
It is an annual tradition before each Chinese New Year for our staff to drop by Miri Old Folks Home to pay the elderly a courtesy visit.

May & August 2008
Samling rushes aid to fire victims
Two unfortunate fire tragedies took place within the span of the past three months, razing the homes of two longhouse communities of Punan Bah in Ulu Kapit and Rumah Ado in Ulu Tatau. More than 1,000 people were made homeless as results of the fires.

On both occasions, Samling together with its employees coordinated efforts and rushed to help in the recovery efforts by dispatching essential items such as diesel fuel and food items like rice and canned food, and cooking utensils to provide immediate relief for the victims. Total donation in cash and kind amounted to more than RM15,000.

“We are saddened by these tragedies, and we want to ensure that the immediate needs of the victims are taken care of,” said James Ho, Samling’s Chief Operating Officer. “Victims of fire had gone through a crisis and we must help them restart their lives as soon as possible. Helping the needy has always been a part of our efforts,” he added.

Samling also stood ready to offer long-term assistance by contributing building materials for the rebuilding of the houses that were gutted in the fire, including supplying zinc sheets for roofing, plywood and assorted nails to erect temporary shelters for the displaced villagers.
Following the completion of the Localised Nature Guide Course Level 2 conducted in April to May 2007, 15 participants who completed the course received their certificates from Sarawak Skills Development Centre’s (PPKS) Registrar, Encik Albar Abdul Rahman at Kelesa Camp on 14 July 2007.

The event was also attended by Mr. Samuel Chung, Managing Director of Straits Central Travel and Tours Sdn. Bhd., officers from PPKS and heads of local indigenous communities.

This course is a preparatory one as those who completed it must apply to the Ministry of Tourism to be considered for the tour guide licence based on their results and performance during the course.

The top three students from the course were Buring Nyagang (Kenyah from Long Tungan), Lawai Tu’uh (Kelabit from Long Lellang) and Susan Pulut (Penan from Ba’Mubui). All three agreed that this was a great opportunity to learn new skills and were hoping to qualify as tour guides.

“We learnt new skills like map reading, trail marking and identifying flora as well as fauna. It was a great experience,” said Buring.

Lawai said he is more confident after attending the course which also enhanced his communication skills. He said the course was good for character-building and exposed him to many new things.

Susan talked about the opportunity to move up the economic value chain and the prospect to make tour guiding a career.

“It was a great experience,” said Susan.

You may not know this but several areas in the Sela’an-Linau Forest Management Unit (FMU), Samling’s MTCC-certified area that spans 56,000 ha in Ulu Baram, in the Miri division of Sarawak have many different attractions.

If you go by road, you will pass by cloud-covered forests along the way into the FMU. Upon entering the FMU, you can see Bukit Simang (3,060 ft above sea level) distinguished by its humps resembling that of a camel resting, a beautiful sight to behold. Not much farther is the cloud-covered Bukit Murud Kecil. At 5,300 ft above sea level, it is the highest mountain in the State. Hidden within the range of Bukit Murud Kecil is the spectacular Sela’an Waterfall.

Take a walk through the forests on the slopes of Bukit Murud Kecil and you will discover a rich biodiversity of flora and fauna. On the lower slopes are many salt licks where a variety of wildlife can be spotted at certain times during the day and the night.

Three ethnic groups live within or adjacent to the FMU – the Kelabits are located in Long Lellang A & B, but in and around the area are other Kenyah and Penan communities. A day visit or an overnight stay in the longhouse of the ethnic communities is a perfect way to complete the trip to Ulu Baram and as a visitor, you can view and purchase local handicrafts as souvenirs.

Visitors to the Baram area will often see a standalone building like this where the indigenous community stores their rice after harvesting and drying in a Rice House. Photo shows the typical rice house you can find in the Kenyah community in Long San.

Introducing Breathtaking Attractions in ULU BARAM

You may not know this but several areas in the Sela’an-Linau Forest Management Unit (FMU), Samling’s MTCC-certified area that spans 56,000 ha in Ulu Baram, in the Miri division of Sarawak have many different attractions.

If you go by road, you will pass by cloud-covered forests along the way into the FMU. Upon entering the FMU, you can see Bukit Simang (3,060 ft above sea level) distinguished by its humps resembling that of a camel resting, a beautiful sight to behold. Not much farther is the cloud-covered Bukit Murud Kecil. At 5,300 ft above sea level, it is the highest mountain in the State. Hidden within the range of Bukit Murud Kecil is the spectacular Sela’an Waterfall.

Take a walk through the forests on the slopes of Bukit Murud Kecil and you will discover a rich biodiversity of flora and fauna. On the lower slopes are many salt licks where a variety of wildlife can be spotted at certain times during the day and the night.

Three ethnic groups live within or adjacent to the FMU – the Kelabits are located in Long Lellang A & B, but in and around the area are other Kenyah and Penan communities. A day visit or an overnight stay in the longhouse of the ethnic communities is a perfect way to complete the trip to Ulu Baram and as a visitor, you can view and purchase local handicrafts as souvenirs.

Sela’an Waterfall which is located deep in the forests is a popular spot for picnics among the indigenous communities.

A historical attraction located in Lio MatO in Ulu Baram reachable only by river. The Fort was used as an observation deck during the British rule but a visit there today will give you an expansive panoramic view of the area.

Visitors to the Baram area will often see a standalone building like this where the indigenous community stores their rice after harvesting and drying in a Rice House. Photo shows the typical rice house you can find in the Kenyah community in Long San.
The location was Samling’s Kelesa Camp in Ulu Baram, Sarawak. John Mathai, a wildlife biologist with Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) was having a chat with some other “citizens” of the camp when Kata Kata caught up with him.

With his thick beard and looking very much the adventurer he is, John shared his views about his job and wildlife conservation research that was being carried out in the Sela’an-Linau Forest Management Unit (FMU) area.

To fulfil the aspect of wildlife conservation under the Forest Management Plan in the Sela’an-Linau FMU, Samling has engaged the help of WCS which is based in New York.

WCS has currently two of its personnel working in the Sela’an-Linau FMU. One of them is John Mathai from Kuching, who joined WCS at the end of 2003.

John, 34, said his work included surveys not only covering the wildlife but also fruit trees that exist in the forests.

Using several indigenous people, Penans whom he defined as “the best” of his guides, John also installed camera trappings which he said has succeeded in taking pictures of rare animal species like the clouded leopard, marble cats and banded linsang (quite similar to civet cats).

John described Samling’s wildlife conservation initiative in the Sela’an-Linau FMU as a good start.

*Within the last one year I have seen a lot of changes. However, there is still room for more improvement. There is a lot of work to be done from all parties. The most important thing is that we have to keep on working as a team,” he said.

John also said that more forestry companies need to participate and adopt the same concerns for the environment and wildlife, similar to what has been done by Samling.

“The practice of SFM under MTCC standards is a win-win situation for everyone, not only for the animals. WCS’ short-term objective is to make this project succeed. If it succeeds, it can expand to the whole state, which is our long-term goal for all timber concessions in Sarawak,” he added.

Samling has been working with WCS, an international organisation seeking to protect wildlife and wild lands, together with the Sarawak Forest Department, since 2002. The focus of their work is on wildlife conservation research and development at the Sela’an Linau FMU where Samling received Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC) forest management certification.

Samling undertook to establish various measures to ensure wildlife conservation, including establishing a system to regulate access of vehicles into our concession and ensuring all our employees observe guidelines set by the Company as well as the WCS.

On the other hand, the WCS assisted in conducting researches and monitoring wildlife population, provide training to our staff in conducting surveys wildlife population and make recommendations to enhance wildlife conservation within our concession.

Clean floors! Vinyl carpets to line bare floors, increasing the standard of hygiene in the community.

**COMMUNITY PROJECTS – SNAPSHOT**

**LONG BENALIH**

No more long walks to the stream and lugging heavy pails. Long Benalih residents now have clean water supply channelled directly into their homes because of the micro-hydrodam project and installation of gravity water pipelines, PVC pipes and water taps.

**LONG SEPIGEN**

Electrification and rewiring scheme for the village. Energy saving fluorescent lights, power switches, sockets, cables and conduit piping were installed for power supply efficiency.

Market gardens and community nursery. To promote community self-sufficiency, a community nursery and market garden were established for the villagers to grow their own market produce and supplement their income from the surplus.
TO ENRICH THE TALENT AND SKILLS FORCE IN THE COUNTRIES IN WHICH WE OPERATE, SAMLING GRANTS ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIPS TO STUDENTS WITH OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS AND LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL. WE HAVE PROVIDED OVER RM800,000 TO MORE THAN 30 STUDENTS ATTENDING LOCAL AND FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES WHO PURSUED STUDIES IN AREAS RELEVANT TO OUR FORESTRY OPERATIONS.

WONG CHIEN YAW IS ONE PERSON WHO HAS RECEIVED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM SAMLING TO FURTHER HIS STUDIES. TODAY, HE IS AMONGST THE DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARS WHO ARE LIVING LIVES BEYOND THEIR WILDEST IMAGINATION. IN HIS EMAIL TO SAMLING, HE DESCRIBED HIS LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE AND HOW IT ALL STARTED.

Dear Samling,

Back in 1997 when the Asian financial crisis hit, Samling Scholarship was the only reason I was able to pursue an engineering degree at University of Cambridge. I would have abandoned the offer to read at Cambridge if not for the scholarship as I could not have afforded the steep tuition fees and living expenses. And not only was Samling providing the financial means in a timely and consistent manner which allowed me to pay my bills on time, the human resource staff at Samling consistently provided moral support and the encouragement which helped towards the completion of my degree.

At the end of four years, I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Engineering with Distinction. I majored in Manufacturing Engineering – one of the most demanding engineering courses as it involved actual consultancy projects with multi-national manufacturing organisations in addition to the theoretical research. For my final year project, I collaborated with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Boston to research on the application of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) for the manufacturing and supply chain environment.

After the completion of my final year project, I was invited by the project supervisor, Prof Duncan McFarlane, to pursue a PhD in RFID, also at Cambridge. Prof McFarlane was heading the Auto-ID Centre at Cambridge in collaboration with MIT to research on building a global RFID Internet network infrastructure, a revolutionary idea that is essentially the next generation of the Internet – the “Internet of Things”. I was elated that the company encouraged me to pursue my doctoral degree.

As a part of a twenty-researchers team at MIT and Cambridge, we transformed RFID into a global technology which has led to a continuing implementation of RFID in various commercial and private sectors – from Wal-Mart and Tesco in the retail industry, to the US Department of Defence in the defence industry, and even airport handling systems in Hong Kong and Las Vegas just to name a few. Our work generated a huge amount of interest globally – but locally within Malaysia, this has lead to RFID embedded in all new Malaysian passports and potentially in all new car number plates.

During my research, I was also the Cambridge leader for a 14.3 million (RM72.8 million) European Union (EU) project called BRIDGE (Building Radio Frequency Identification for the Global Environment), a collaboration with numerous universities and multinational companies such as Carrefour and Sony, where I have provided significant input to the proposal and the subsequent leadership for various work packages within it. I have been consulted by many blue-chip organisations, trained companies such as Intel, Microsoft, SAP and DHL. I also travelled extensively to present at numerous conferences around the world.

I have since graduated with a PhD in supply chain RFID. Work is still continuing in BRIDGE and in a spin-out company also owned by and operating within Cambridge. As a scholar sponsored by Samling, I am proud and grateful to say that I am only able to do this with Samling’s support – and therefore it is Samling, through what I achieved, who has indirectly contributed towards the development of global RFID development.

Thank you, Samling!

With best regards,
Chien Yaw