



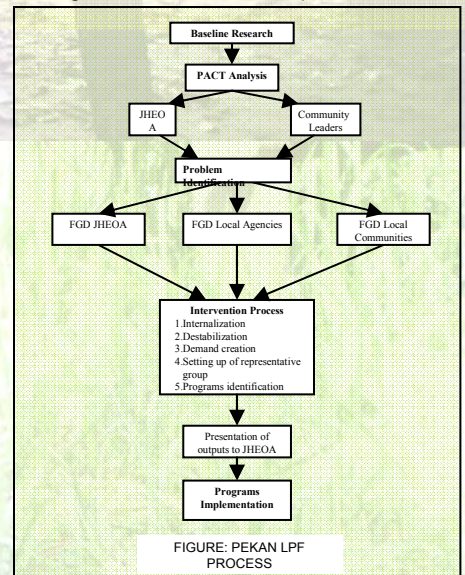
Space for decision-making among the Orang Asli communities in Pekan District, Pahang

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PROJECT SUMMARY

The indigenous people (Orang Asli) in Pekan District, Pahang, are known to live and depend on peat swamp forests and its resources for their livelihood. However, they were somehow left behind in the mainstream development. Orang Asli communities are being identified as the fringe communities. This study aimed to create awareness among the local agencies in creating space for Orang Asli communities to involve themselves in decision-making process on the improving their quality of life as well as to produce model in approaches for improving space availability for indigenous people in decision-making process. In order to understand the background of this issue, PACT analysis with District Officer of Department of Orang Asli Affairs (JHEOA) in Pekan and the *Tok Batin* of the selected villages were conducted. Several stakeholders related to this issue were identified. To proceed with this research, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) involving local agencies was conducted to facilitate this issue. Through this FGD, the research group is able to create networking with other agencies and has developed possibilities for future partnership and programs regarding space for decision making process to benefit Orang Asli communities and the sustainability of their livelihood. Several problems, including social problems, were identified. Also, a few programs were suggested by the local agencies to improve the space for decision-making. These included compulsory education for the communities and implementing of positive discrimination on Orang Asli in education. In order to further understand the situation, a FGD with the local communities was conducted. Education was also identified to be an important element to improve their lifelihood. It could be concluded that education opportunities for Orang Asli communities is important to create space for them in decision-making.



Project's Potential

- The need for education and extension to further enhance their space in decision making are being identified.
- Methods that will enhance Orang Asli interest in getting further education and extension will be developed



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