

Greetings from Indonesia. Our wonderful dentist and program manager, Hotlin has written this month's update about starting our conservation program. Our team traveled to villages around Gunung Palung National Park to provide health care and to start to explain how communities can receive health care discounts if they protect Gunung Palung National Park.

Kinari

Dear Friends,

In the months of August and September, we went out to several villages around the National Park. This time we are very happy to have our new team member Fahrizal who is our community coordinator for the conservation program.



The health department, local government, the public health center who cover the villages that we were about to go, all have a very positive response to our program. They were helping us with how we're going to do the clinic, which facilities we could use, where we were going to stay (in some villages it takes a day trip to reach).

The first village that we went to is Kepayang. After talking and making coordination with the head of the village, the whole team departed from the clinic with one car and we rented a pick up truck to bring our team of seven peoples, medicine and our food for our 'fuel' to work.

On our trip to Kepayang after about two hours drive over bumpy road we stopped, had a little picnic and enjoy our lunch under some trees by the road. This moment of time make us closer among our team. Making jokes and tease each other. This very informal situation and later all the girls bathing together drew us closer. Then we continued our trip again with the bumpy road. Finally we arrive and all of us rushed to find rest room.



The meeting was held in 'Rumah Adat' –Traditional community house and attended by 28 leaders of three small villages. We were also accompanied by friends from a conservation education non-profit. We were introducing our program, and explaining the connection between health and conservation of the forest. This was the first meeting with these communities to discuss how we can work together to preserving the forest. We want them to know that we really appreciate it if they take care of the forest by providing health care incentives. People were excited about the ideas and want to work together on the details.



The next day we run our clinic in the primary school building. It was a Sunday, so we have the building available for us. We have patients come from other villages near by as well.

We saw many patients and a big number with the possibility of Tuberculosis. This situation really emphasizes that we need to do a program for TB.

Since I am a dentist I like to tell a stories about my patient. It was really a busy day for me and Dr. Romi. Most of the patients I saw had never been to a dentist before. I saw a very brave little girl with a chronic infection where the roots of her two upper mid teeth had ruptured the upper lip. She was very cooperative with the treatment, especially with the case she has, I think she was the most cooperative patient I ever had with this condition. She likes to have her picture taken. I was able to pull out her teeth so the rupture will close. I was using the regular chair so it was quite difficult to work.



The next day we went to the other village, still in the same region. We were using the community leader's house. They were so keen to help us by setting up space and room for the clinic. They all worked together to put up a plastic roof for shade in the front yard and borrow some tables and chairs from the neighborhood. Again that day was a very tired day for Dr. Romi but he's happy he can directly come and interact with the patient in the village. He saw over 90 patients in both villages.



The second village that we went to was Batubarat. It takes about 40 minutes drive from the clinic and then the team continued the trip to reach the village by renting a speed boat, the river trip was about an hour. The first day we had a meeting on the program in the center of

the village. This meeting was attended by 15 villages' leaders. The next day we had a mobile clinic in the public health center where there usually is only a nurse. It was a rainy day but the number of patients who came still making the team busy.



It is a very nice experience to go around many villages around the national park, where we can see their life, houses, and listen to their concerns and hopes.

Thank you for your support that has given us the chance to serve the community.

*Wasalam* (Greetings) from Sukadana,

Hotlin