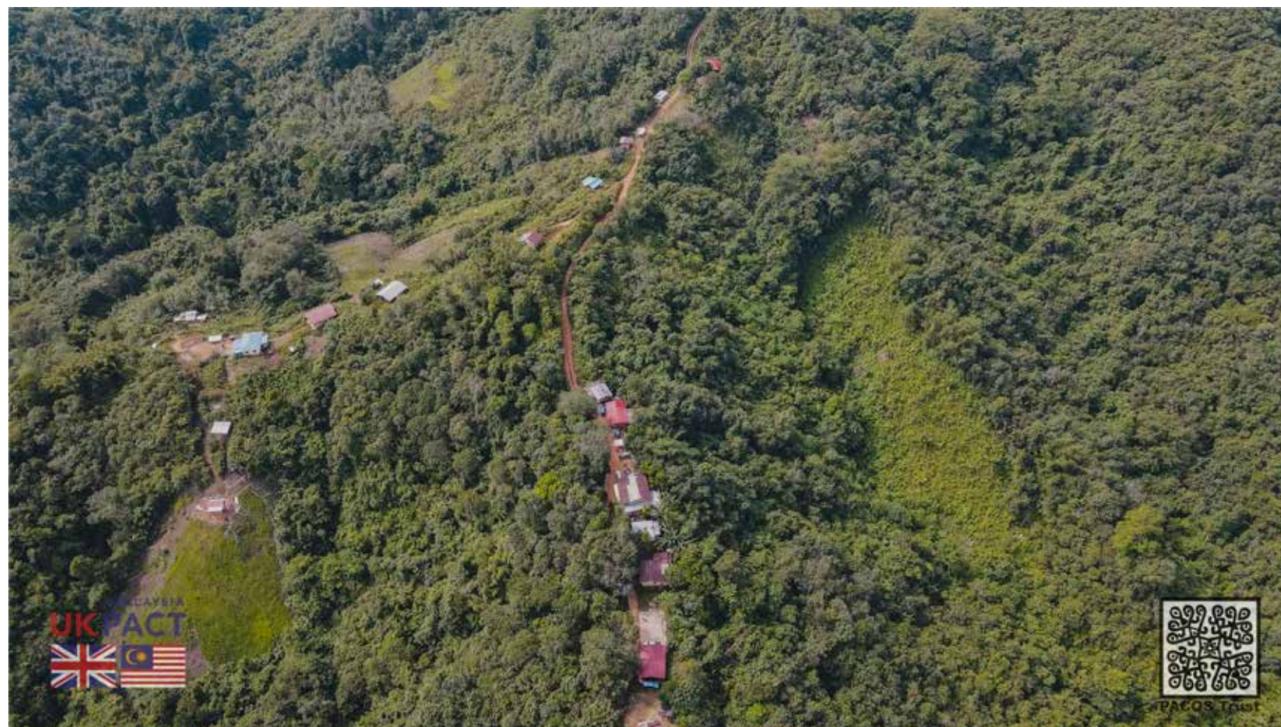


# SABAH RENEWABLE ENERGY RURAL ELECTRIFICATION CONSORTIUM AWARDED AT 2022 REM ASIA



Viewers of the online awards' ceremony caught glimpses of Sabah, with communities from ridge to river, while a video recognising Sabah Renewable Energy Rural Electrification Roadmap (SabahRE2)'s work was screened as one of three award recipients. The Renewable Energy Markets (REM) Asia Award is an annual award presented by United States-based Center for Resource Solutions (CRS) that honours outstanding achievements by individuals and companies in promoting renewable energy in Asia.



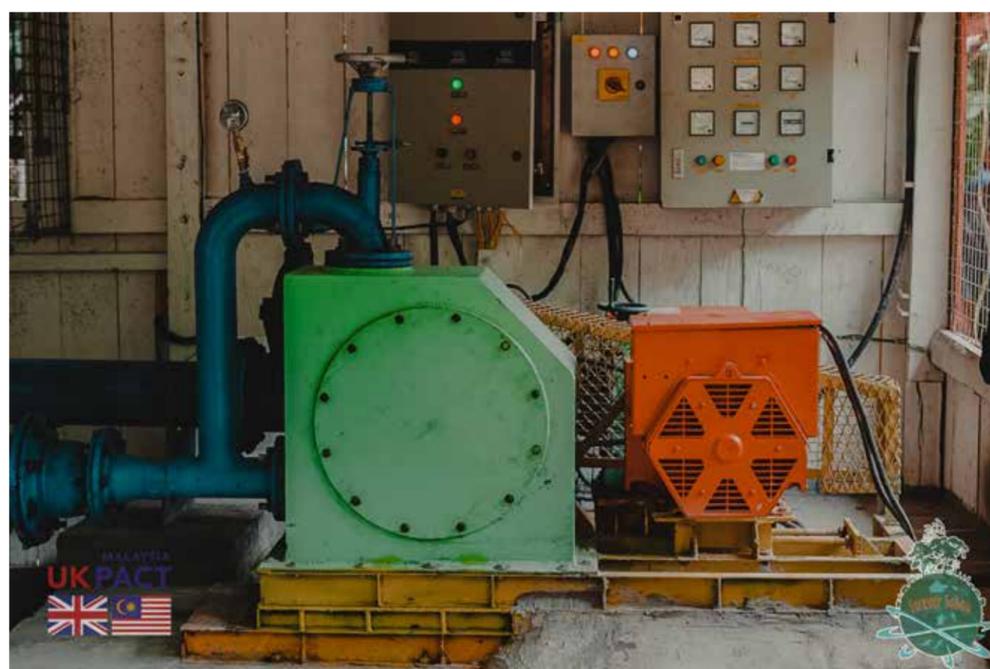
*(Kg Puralai-Giring, Ulu Sugut, Ranau. Photo credit to PACOS Trust)*

Having begun to build relational capacity between key stakeholders and seeing the path forward, what once seemed impossible has become increasingly possible. With the hard work of SabahRE2 since its April 2021 start, the 2022 REM Asia Award marks a moment of affirmation from global champions in the field.

Harnessing indigenous knowledge to help drive policy recommendations that can accelerate energy access for Malaysia's most underserved communities is an approach to rural electrification proposed by SabahRE2, drawn up by a Consortium comprising Forever Sabah, TONIBUNG, PACOS Trust and Green Empowerment.

“Sabah is home to nearly three quarters of un-electrified rural Malaysians and is also a region of bio-diverse significance,” said Forever Sabah Chief Executive Facilitator, Cynthia Ong, “There is a real opportunity for the state’s un-electrified rural communities to manage their own energy supply through renewables to sustain and grow their quality of life.”

With a goal of building 200 renewable energy mini-grids across rural Sabah by 2030, the SabahRE2 consortium and partners mapped over 400 of the state’s un-electrified villages using a combination of satellite, administrative, and field data, and surveyed 200 of them to better understand the energy demands of the communities.



*(Microhydro Site at Kg. Buayan, Penampang. Photo credit to Forever Sabah)*

Anne Lasimbang, Executive Director of PACOS Trust, believes that the community organising approach is part of SabahRE2’s DNA. “How the roadmap evolves is largely guided by the issues and aspirations voiced by the communities themselves,” she shared, adding, “We engage with them from the very beginning as the process of Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) is essential to avoid making groundless assumptions about their needs and perspectives.”



*(Feasibility Studies at Pulau Banggi. Photo credit to TONIBUNG)*

This created a foundation for SabahRE2’s feasibility studies to build upon, where 57 villages were assessed for their viability of constructing solar or micro-hydro mini-grids to meet their energy and growth demands. “By partnering with the communities, we are able to carry out our work in more practical and productive ways,” said Adrian Banie Lasimbang, Technical Advisor of TONIBUNG, an organisation that has spent the last two decades integrating community-based models with renewable energy generation. “When the locals understand what is needed to generate power, they are motivated to conserve their natural resources and watersheds for potential mini-grid systems,” he explained.



*(Kg Tagapalang, Paitan. Photo credit to TONIBUNG)*

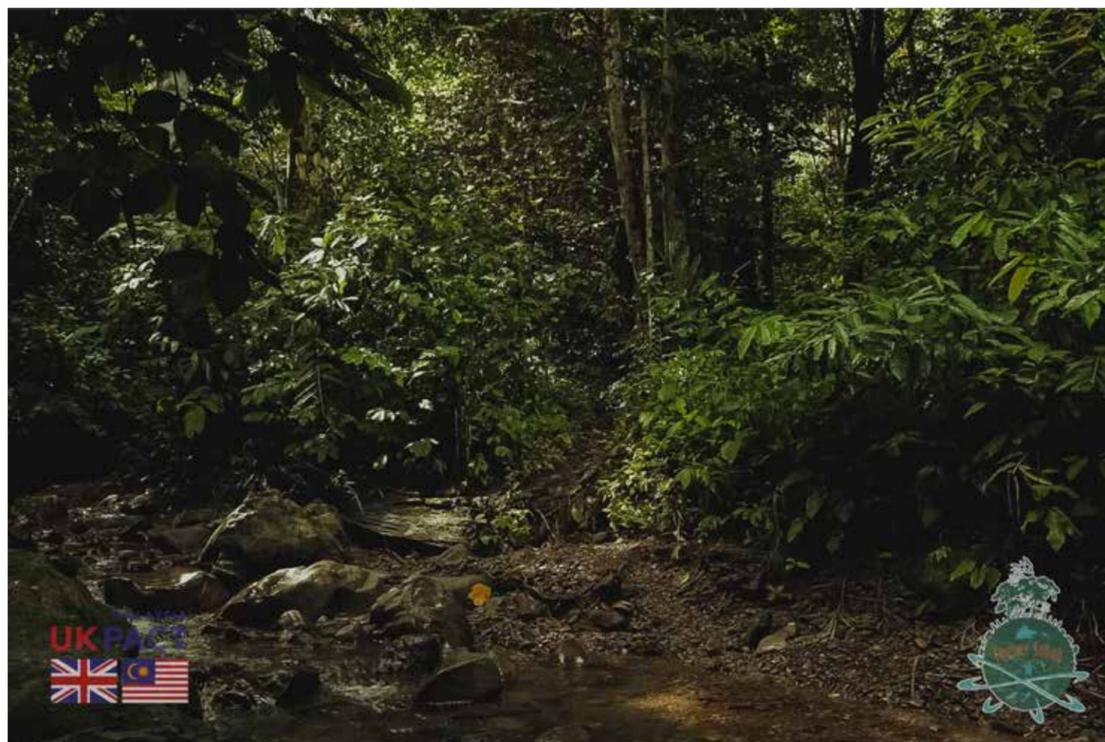
A community-based approach shapes the roadmap, where data is deployed to develop mini-grid toolkits, assess feasibility, inform training modules and knowledge transfers, as well as suggest policy, create funding models, and reveal real life stories.



*(Artisanal Fisheries at Kg. Dagat. Photo credit to Forever Sabah)*

“The SabahRE2 roadmap is about using clear data, grassroots perspectives, state-of-the art models and maps to inform rural electrification policy. We have created this platform to guide policy-makers, developers, and communities in evaluating the most optimal energy solutions. We are pleased that the efforts of the consortium and government partners have been recognized by REM, but it is our hope that stakeholders will continue to guide us in improving the roadmap and our process.” said Gabriel Wynn, The SabahRE2 initiative’s Strategic Lead.

Sabah RE2 acknowledges its government partners, Sabah Economic Planning Unit (UPEN), Ministry of Rural Development Sabah (KPLB), and Sabah Electricity Sdn Bhd (SESB), and the financial support of UK PACT.



*(Interiors of Ulu Papar. Photo credit to Forever Sabah)*

Learn more about Sabah RE2 Roadmap

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