



**DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
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*GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION*

**DRAFT INDIVIDUAL PROJECT REVIEW REPORT**

**COMPANY:** RIMBUNAN HIJAU

**LOGGING SITES:** WAWOI GUAVI & PANAKAWA  
(MIDDLE FLY - WESTERN PROVINCE)

**DATE OF FIELD TRIP:** 17 - 21 APRIL 2004

**INTRODUCTION**

The Department for Community Development is a member of the Inter Agency Forestry Review Team put together by the Government of PNG to review existing logging operations in the country. The DfCD is a social sector Department which is mandated by the Government to advocate for Social Welfare Development in the country. The operation of the Department is governed by the following legislations and Policies,, National Womens Policy (1990) PNG National Council Of Women Act (1979) PNG Platform for Action: A Decade of Action for Women towards National Unity and Sustainability (1995-2005), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women/CEDAW (1995) Social Development Policy (1993) Child Welfare Act Chapter 276 (1976), Convention on the Rights of Children /CRC (1993), the Civil Registration Act and the Marriage Act of PNG.

Large Project Developments such as mining, petroleum, and logging affect women and children disproportionately. The well being of children and women provide the most sensitive indicators of the human impact of development yet they tend to be neglected in

the planning and development process of these projects and issues that directly affect them are generally accorded low priority.

This report will highlight the social impact of the logging operation within the vicinity of the operation (logging population), forest resource owners, employees and their families and the community at large. This individual review report will be circulated to all the major stakeholders of the logging operations before the final Recommendations and Summary Report is finalised by the Review Team.

### **PROJECT REVIEW FIELD TRIP**

The field trip to Wawoi Guavi & Panakawa took place from the 17 – 22 of April 2004. Situated in the Middle Fly District of Western Province, this logging operation is very isolated and it takes almost half a day to get to the nearest airstrip at Kamusie on a twin otter airplane. The Wawoi Guavi Project has been a difficult one for the Review Team to access because one landowner company (Mubami Resources Ltd) did not want the Review Team go to Wawoi Guavi Project therefore, they took out a court injunction on the Review Team, which was later squashed by the Court.

### **DATA COLLECTION METHOD**

Data contained in this report was collected or obtained through meetings/discussions with landowners, forest resource owners and the community at large. Several meetings were organized and held with all the major stakeholders. At these forums, women were mainly asked to talk about their stories based on their lived experiences in relation to the Logging Companies. Issues were picked from the stories told, which were clarified with short questions and answers particular when it was necessary to establish the negative and positive impacts of the logging operation on the lives of people.

### **FINDINGS**

- Wawoi Guavi TRP is very isolated from the District Headquarter, Balimo and the rest of government seats in Western Province. The services provided there is by the Company, Rimbunan Hijau. In fact, people call RH the government in Kamusie.
- The area has a very low population density. People have led a nomadic lifestyle until logging companies moved into the area. There is very little visible activity of local people working and cultivating the land either for subsistence farming or cash cropping.
- Several convenient marriages have been started by the expatriate workers and local women. The women are left to bring up their children on their own after the men leave.
- The Kamusie Health Center is fully operated by RH. It is currently staffed by a Medical Doctor, 1 Nursing Officer (NO), 2 Community Health Workers (CHW); 1 Clinic Aid and 2 cleaners.

Medicine is supplied by the Company (RH) and the Government. RH has secured assistance from International NGOs like Rotary to supply medicine. However, according to the Doctor at the Health Center, medicines supplied by Rotary so far have been expired and it has become a worry because many of the medicines cannot be used six months after the expiry date.

- Employment condition of health workers needs to be improved. There are no proper toilets and drinking water in their houses.
- Services provided include;
  - i) inpatient Care,
  - ii) dental services,
  - iii) TB clinic,
  - iv) minor laboratory providing pregnancy and malarial tests,
  - v) antenatal clinic, general wards and a labour ward with birthing facilities and
  - vi) the clinic performs minor surgery and caters for referrals from other logging Camps.

The Health Center provides services to employees of the Company and the community at large (a population of 2000+).

#### **Findings at the Panakawa Veneer Mill**

- Working condition of employees is very poor. There are no showers at the workplace for females working on night shifts. Health safety measures are not observed at the work place. At the time of our visit to the Veneer Mill, workers had no boots on, no mouth guard, no ear-plugs, no helmet etc.
- Salaries of employees is 63 toea per hour and working hours is 7 am – 7 pm. No overtime if employees work beyond 7 pm.
- Accommodation condition is very poor. Seven people (single) live in one room (4x4). Similarly, two families share a 4x4 room with a single switch to the light/fan and only a curtain separating them (very poor marriage accommodation).
- Private business is restricted to expatriate workers only, no nationals are allowed to do business at project sites. Expatriate employees are given opportunity to have their turns in stocking the store at the site with their goods to sell.
- There is communication problem between nationals and expatriates (most expatriates have very limited knowledge of English).
- Alleged discrimination practices at Panakawa Veneer Mill, where expatriates of Malaysian origin are allowed to conduct themselves more freely than the others

which include Papua New Guineans, Indonesians, Filipinos etc. Double standard in terms of sexual relations, an example to demonstrate this, is on two separate occasions; two Malaysians were caught having sex with local female workers in containers at different times. The women were later terminated while the two men remained working. Another case involves employees of Indonesian origin who had an affair at the camp and the woman fell pregnant. Both had their employment contracts terminated.

- There is allegation of Indonesians (women) recruited as sex workers. Those who fall pregnant, are sent back home.
- There is allegation by national female & male workers that the former boss (the only national) of the Personnel Department was involved in organizing some national female workers to provide sexual favours to the expatriates (Malaysians) at the camp. He physically abused females who refused to entertain his request. NB. This issue became controversial early this year. Malaysians who have been involved in this practice are said to have put ball bearings into their private parts to boost their sexual desires, however, this has had very severe effects on the females they have had sexual contacts with.
- Landowners and employees stated that the Task Force Police were there to protect the Company and their supporters and not citizens of PNG. (Allegation of getting bribery from RH)
- Employees both from Panakawa and Kamusie reported that there were many foreigners in Wawoi Guavi who are illegally in the country. They enter through the Border (Sandaun) and are airlifted to Kamusie and Panakawa by Tropicair (RH private air services)

#### **Income Generation Activities**

There is no income generation activity by the landowners. The area is so rich with marine resources, yet landowners are not involved in harvesting these resources to sell at the markets.

#### **Recommendations:**

- i) There is an urgent need for the Government to address the situation of landowners, workers and the community at large in the Wawoi Guavi TRP.
- ii) There is an urgent need for the Government to establish its authority in the area. The absence of Government makes RH think and act as if it is the government there.
- iii) The issues relating to Logging operation must go beyond the boundaries of the National Forest Authority (NFA). The Department for Community Development must have an input in the Project Agreement. At that moment, social issues are

addressed in terms of Infrastructure development (schools, aidposts, etc). The social Impact Studies of these logging operations must be part and parcel of the whole package from the very beginning (negotiation phase). This will enable the developer and organizations like DfCD to develop appropriate strategies to minimize the negative impacts of these big developments.

- iv) A certain percentage of the revenue from the Forestry resources must be put aside and be used for the purpose of on site monitoring. These resources will assist other relevant government agencies to monitor the activities of the logging operations. Monitoring at logging sites is not only the responsibility of the Forestry Authority.
- v) The negative impacts, of big developments are felt by people (men, women, girls, boys, children) first. It is the responsibility of the DfCD to ensure that problems, which result from large developments like logging are controlled or minimized to a level where people are able to continue enjoying what life can offer them. With all the many large developments in the country, there is a need for the DfCD better resourced and equipped to be able to effectively monitor logging operations in the country. The DfCD needs upgraded communication system, which includes having a computerised system where data on social issues could be processed and kept for planning and programming purposes in the affected areas. There is also a need for the DfCD to get access to the Internet.
- vi) Women must be included in all major decision-making from the very beginning of the project negotiation. Women are the closest gender to the environment. The land is their livelihood. Men must never be allowed to proxy for women, they will not be able to represent women's issues as well as women.