

CANADIAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN IRIAN JAYA

The Canada Fund for Local Initiatives is a mission-administered program which focusses on small projects at the grassroots level through collaboration with local NGOs. All Canada Fund projects have an element of local participation through which communities can develop and strengthen their self-reliance. Particular emphasis is placed on strengthening women's participation in development and on human resource development.

The Indonesian province of Irian Jaya, with its delicate mixture of tribal and modern life, has become a focus for these training activities.

In November 1988, Canadian Ambassador Jack Whittleton travelled to Irian Jaya accompanied by Syarifah A. Hasanudin, who helps administer the Canada Fund at the Embassy. One objective of the visit was to assess the progress of several small projects which being are financed through a block rural grant arrangement with a local NGO, The Irian Jaya Rural Community Development Foundation (YPMD).

Ambassador Whittleton and Ms Hasanudin visited a basket-weaving and pillar-making project near the capital, Jayapura. Canada has contributed Rp2,000,000 (about \$1,425) to this enterprise, which now has 130 members and has generated much needed local revenue.

A visit was also made to Agats, a village in the south which is the main centre of the Asmat tribe. Environmental protection is the focus this project. Canada has provided Rp8,000,000 (about \$5,000) to pay for the training of 30 people in the conservation of forest resources.

Through these and many other small projects, Canada hopes contribute to the development of the region, while respecting local norms and customs. This year, the Embassy expects to devote 15% of the Canada Fund to small projects to underline our continuing commitment to this important province of Indonesia.

A WAY OF LIFE CONTINUES

The Indonesian Government has focussed a great deal of attention on bringing basic education, health care and administration to Irian Jaya. For its part, the Canadian Government has supported both large and small development projects in this remote province which forms the western half of the island of Papua New Guinea.

Despite the efforts of various aid-giving agencies, in some places, though not all, life goes on pretty much as one would expect it did hundreds, even thousands of years ago. This presents development challenges of a scale and nature not always appreciated by outsiders.

During a visit to Irian Jaya, R. Mank, Second Secretary at the Canadian Embassy in Jakarta, managed to capture on film glimpses of what everyday life can be like for the Dani tribe in the interior highlands.



1. Dani women assume their traditional roles at a very young age. Here a prepubescent girl carries her younger brother in a sack which, typically, is tied around her head. Despite the cool climate, clothing for women is rudimentary, comprising grass skirts for single women and cloth skirts for those who are married

2. A Dani tribesman carrying wood which he will rely upon for cooking and heating. Again, despite cool temperatures, he wears only the traditional penis sheath, called a Koteka

3. This Dani woman is mourning the death of her brother. The tradition of caking the body with mud during the month-long mourning period is still carefully observed, as is, in some cases, the practice of cutting off a finger during the period

