

PROGRESS REPORT

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2021



Yayasan Pendidikan
Budaya Mentawai



FOREWORD

YPBM Chairman: “In February and March, our Mentawai Cultural Education Foundation (YPBM) team has continued to implement our indigenous learning hub program across southern Siberut. The impact of our program continues to increase amongst students and the broader Mentawai community, with cultural leaders and senior members from Salappak, Ugai and Rokdog requesting that our program be implemented within their respective villages. During February and March, the YPBM team travelled to these villages to present our model and provide the necessary training and processes required to achieve a successful cultural education outcome for all. In addition, we continued to further our cultural education materials projects, including the plant field guide, language dictionary, and other initiatives that support the advancement of education equity for indigenous Mentawai.”

I. Increase student participation in our Mentawai indigenous learning hubs

During February / March, the YPBM extended team continued to assist and motivate students to participate in the learning hub program. As part of our ongoing strategy, we are working to give students more practical learning opportunity to increase their interests, including learning activities conducted out in the field. We note that during February / March, the Bubuakat Simalainge hub in Maileppet village has had a lower participation and activity level than the other 5 hubs, so in an effort to find solution we have provided them with a new teaching schedule that is more aligned with their current needs.



Funds spent this month to further our target:

AUD \$ 0

II. Increase the number of Indigenous learning hubs throughout wider Siberut and the Mentawai Islands

In the month of February, our foundation team opened a new indigenous learning hub in the village of Salappak. We are most excited by this opportunity to share our cultural education program with young students from this remote region. We have continued to refine our program model so that it can be easily adapted to new communities in whatever location they are situated. The Salappak community were immensely supportive and welcoming of the establishment of this new learning program and partnership with our foundation.

During March, our Foundation team travelled to Ugai and Rokdog villages to discuss the implementation of our program within their communities. Both situated in a very remote region of Siberut Island, we were honoured to be invited to visit and discuss our cultural education model. As with Salappak, the Ugai and Rokdog communities were very eager to form a partnership with our foundation and take next steps to opening the Mentawai learning hub program for their students and children. This is a great outcome for all involved and we are very excited to work with these communities well into the future



Funds spent this month to further our target:
AUD \$ 400

III. Mentawai students understand cultural knowledge and its value for the future

To improve the quality of our cultural and ecological education program across all existing and future learning hubs, we continue to give focus to further strengthening our educational materials - including curriculum. To further maximise and take advantage of the resources we have on hand, we are working to invite and incorporate our tribal elders and leaders – including Sikerei (shaman) - to provide direct teachings and impart their expert knowledge to our hub students.



Funds spent this month to further our target:
AUD \$ 800

IV. Increase economic capacity for students and the wider Mentawai community

Due to the current travel bans, our focus on improving economic capacity is focused on strengthening skills and understanding surrounding Mentawai's traditional handicraft. Almost every week the students will have opportunity to participate in a weaving, carving or other handicraft workshop activity. In addition, students are being taught how to grow and utilise plant resources by creating their own gardens. This activity gives students a real-world perspective through the process of generating a small amount of funding from the garden to contribute toward operation of each individual learning hub.

Funds spent this month to further our target:

AUD \$ 0

V. Strengthening indigenous learning hub materials for present and future generations

1. Mentawai Dictionary

During February / March, we completed accuracy checks of our revised edition Mentawai Rereiket dialect – Indonesian language dictionary. We are now seeking support for the design and printing costs for this publication. During March, the language documentation team began creating a reverse edition which translates from Indonesian language to Mentawai rereiket dialect, as this will provide opportunity for Indonesians outside of Mentawai to learn our Rereiket dialect

2. Learning hub teaching materials

We are still in the refinement stage of our revised curriculum, with inclusion or addition to topics such as turuk laggai (traditional dance), creative dance, Mentawai's traditional foods, handicraft and arts, and processing sago. At this stage we're still needing to include imagery to compliment the text for clearer example. For the traditional wedding (pangureijat) clothing, we are still gathering research and additional imagery to complete this section. For the additional 6 topics we're seeking to include, we are currently discussing with each learning hub teacher and cultural leaders to determine the most relevant and best source of accurate information.

3. Ethnobotany Project

We have now finalised the Siberut Plant Field Guide and are now in the process of seeking support to prepare for printing and publication. Our hope is that this book will become an accurate and valued source of learning for our hub students, and of course the broader Mentawai community and beyond.



Funds spent this month to further our target:

AUD \$ 0



Photo 1. Maileppet indigenous learning hub students learn about the art of making Mentawai's cultural bracelet, the Letcu.

Photo 2. Muntei's cultural learning hub students are taught about their traditional folklore from one of their indigenous teachers.

Photo 3. Students of the Pasigeugeu cultural learning hub in Toktuk village are taught how to process sago flour, the staple food of the Mentawai.

VI. Increase the organization's capacity to improve the administration, operations and financial security of our foundation

In February / March 2021, our team of staff consists of 7 people, plus 10 learning hub program teachers and managers. By utilising the funds available, we continue to implement positively impacting and cost-effective indigenous education programs for Mentawai students. February / March also saw the continuation of restoring our office roof by replacing the old thatch with new thatch to prevent further water damage to the interior



Funds spent this month to further our target:
AUD \$ 164

VII. Conduct and strengthen strategic and monitoring and evaluation programs

During February / March, the Foundation team worked on rearranging the schedule to accommodate the new learning hub/s. This was conducted to ensure all students receive equal opportunity to obtain this cultural and ecological education. Strategically, we see that this will also enable the Maileppet hub to maximise the return to full capacity and student participation.

As for our new learning hubs in Salappak, Ugai and Rokdog, we are scheduled to commence funding support and ongoing collaborations this month, as the programs are now underway. To reiterate: we have found that, for the best method in expanding our program and opening new hubs, it is necessary to involve the local village government, formal schools, traditional leaders (including Sikerei), community leaders, cultural experts and so forth. The aim is for the learning hub to belong to teach respective community, so that they have ownership in its development.



Funds spent this month to further our target:

AUD \$ 263

Total funds spent this month to further our target:

AUD \$ 1,627



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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