

# PROGRESS REPORT

## *AUGUST-SEPTEMBER*



Yayasan Pendidikan  
Budaya Mentawai





# FOREWORD

During this Aug/Sep reporting period, the Mentawai Cultural Education Foundation team have worked tirelessly to continue implementation of our cultural and ecological education program, achieving all proposed targets for these months. These program activities include indigenous learning hubs weekly learning assistance, language dictionary research and documentation, adding curriculum references, ethnobotany plant field guide project, and other office administration. Again, we acknowledge and give gratitude to our Australian partner, the Indigenous Education Foundation (IEF) for ongoing support.

## I. Increase student participation in our Mentawai indigenous learning hubs

From August to September, students continue to study on a weekly basis at our indigenous learning hubs. Now focusing on the second semester learning program activities, students are gaining new skills and understanding of Mentawai cultural knowledge, which has been received with great enthusiasm. In August-September, we continue to monitor student participation and develop strategy to increase the number of students participating. To assist with this, we are trialing a new system whereby students receive rewards such as writing books and/or pens if they're able to answer correctly to cultural knowledge-based quizzes that are conducted both before and after each class. This has thus far proven quite effective, with students eager to participate so as to improve their understanding and answer correctly in the quiz.

This month our learning hub students also participated in the Matotonan Village anniversary event, which was held on August 9, 2021. During this Matotonan Village anniversary event, students performed cultural song and dance, and also promoted the Mentawai Rereiket dictionary to Matotonan Village invitees and local people.



***Funds spent this month to further our target:***

***AUD \$ 203***



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

With COVID heavily impacting our funding resources to open new hubs, we continue to focus our attention on existing hubs located in three districts within Southern Siberut, namely:

1. Muntei Village: Uma Jaraik Sikerei and Pasigeugeu hubs.
2. Maileppet Village: Bubukat Simalainge' hub
3. Madobag Village: Manai Simaeru' (formally Jaujau Puraukat Simalainge), Baklu, and Totoirak hubs

Our strategic target is to continue providing support and guidance for each hub up until such point that they have capacity to develop and sustain themselves independently.

With regards to the construction of a new hub facility for the Totoirak student group in Buttui, this project was completed during August-September and is now ready to be utilised by the Totoirak students and teachers.



**Dana yang dikeluarkan untuk target pada bulan ini sebesar:**

**Rp. 0**



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

During August-September, our Foundation team continued to make improvement to the quality of educational materials and learning experiences for our learning hubs students. We do this by making the learning topics more engaging and easier for students to understand by integrating imagery within the curriculum booklet and other learning materials. We are seeing an increase in our student's pride for Mentawai culture as a result, hearing that each is very eager to preserve this knowledge wherever they are.

This learning has also been assisted by adding weekly quizzes for students to recap on the previous week's learning and to display their increased knowledge. In addition to this method, the team continues to make improvements and additions to the program's curriculum and teaching materials. English language classes will be introduced on a more regular basis commencing from the first week in October, as we have received much positive feedback about this opportunity for students to better equip themselves with an international language. Through our current program and learning activities, students are encouraged to deepen their knowledge of culture and identity as a pathway to a better future.



***Dana yang dikeluarkan untuk target pada bulan ini sebesar:***

***Rp. 600***



**IV. Increase economic capacity for students and the wider Mentawai community** Our indigenous learning hubs are providing opportunity for students to learn new skills to increase economic capacity. For example, the Pasigeugeu hub has already increased its own economic capacity via the sales of souvenirs made by the students. In addition, the Pasigeugeu hub has received numerous invitations to perform at cultural-based events held both within and outside of Mentawai. This outcome aligns with our target for each hub to become self-sustaining.

Another recent example of increased economic capacity was via the Baklu hub, with innovations to improve their hubs economy by selling or auctioning traditional Mentawai culinary foods at a thanksgiving event held in the Madobag Village. As a result, the Baklu hub raised \$120 for the operation and development of their hub. Hub teachers have suggested that they will then use such funding to purchase more tools and materials for the groups to continue learning to make Mentawai handicrafts and traditional foods. To assist with this, our YPBM team is working on developing basic materials packages for each hub to continue along this trajectory.



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

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

### 1. Mentawai Dictionary

The Mentawai Rereiket dialect to Indonesian language dictionary project continues with work completed on improving accuracy of root words, definition descriptions, pronunciation and so forth. Forewords written by the editors are also being updated to better explain the purposes and benefits of this project. As this task is being completed, the team also continues work on developing an English translated edition – English to Mentawai Rereiket language. The current tasks include conducting interviews with language informants throughout the Sarereiket region, which will continue throughout the October-November period.

The dictionary team are also working on developing an appendix for the second edition of the dictionary, which will include labelled drawings of the structure of an Uma and all Sikerei equipment. We believe that this will give the reader an effective way to understand the text definitions and descriptions within the dictionary.



### 2. Ethnobotany Project

During August, the ethnobotany team made further corrections to the text – particularly focusing on picking up spelling mistakes or inconsistencies. This updated draft has now been shared with Samantha Lee (IEF) and Rob Henry (IEF) for their assistance in cross-checking and sending sharing feedback before we move toward design and publication phase. Our hope and purpose is for this plant field guide to share accurate, invaluable knowledge as a learning material for the Mentawai students, community and also for others.



### 3. Learning hub teaching materials

Our current program curriculum consists of 12 topics, which are taught over a 12 month period. As follows:

#### First semester:

Cultural dance (both ceremonial and creative), traditional foods, handicrafts, sago processing, cultural wedding (pangureijat) clothing. For the first six topics, additional references have been added. The curriculum team will continue to build upon these materials so as to ensure accuracy, relevance and engagement in the existing curriculum.

#### Second semester:

Introduction to Mentawai plant medicine, taboo (keikei), folklore, traditional Mentawai music and musical instruments, traditional tattooing (ti'ti') and the Mentawai clan home and cultural centre (Uma). We're currently working on further developing the theoretical aspects of these curriculum topics. In doing so, the team is sourcing extensive data from community informants as we want to ensure the students are receiving accurate cultural knowledge. During August-September, the team continued to strengthen the curriculum materials for the second semester. This included adding new folklore stories to be taught to the students. Continual consultations with learning hub teachers and committees has been a key part of the process in developing this curriculum.



***Funds spent this month to further our target:***

***AUD \$ 803***

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

Our current YPBM team consists of seven staff, 15 learning hub teachers, with most hubs having 3 teachers (female and male). With a very modest budget, our program continues to achieve so much for our 350+ students and their families. We hope that 2022 sees more opportunity for our Foundation and its stakeholders to increase funding and awareness for our cultural education program, as we are now in a strong position for expedient growth and widespread impact.



***Funds spent this month to further our target:***  
***AUD \$ 1,855***

## VII. Conduct and strengthen strategic and monitoring and evaluation programs

Evaluating the learning hub program in August-September, we found that each individual hub has made improvements to their methods of teaching/learning. As a result, all hubs saw an increase in participation from students and also their participation in community events. Through this, we're also seeing increased development in students, whereby their talents and understanding of Mentawai cultural knowledge continue to improve, as does their confidence and enthusiasm to learn.

***Funds spent this month to further our target:***  
***AUD \$ 150***

***Total funds spent this month to further our target:***  
***AUD \$ 3,611***





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