



OKABA VILLAGE



OKABA EGG-LAYING CHICKEN GROUP PRODUCES FIRST LOCAL EGGS

In July 2025, YDML engaged in regular coordination with the Okaba Egg-Laying Chicken Group to assess the health of hens nearing their laying period.

In anticipation of the upcoming production, the Field Officer procured 120 egg trays and chicken feed from Merauke City to ensure optimal conditions for the hens.

On July 15, 2025, egg trays were transported via speedboat from Kali Kumbe to Sanggase Village. Following this, they were moved to Okaba Village using a pick-up truck, locally known as a blako. Community members actively participated in the transportation process, ensuring that all supplies arrived safely at their destination.

On July 25, 2025, YDML received positive news from Dominggus Nauseni about their poultry project: the hens have begun laying eggs. The group produced two trays of eggs, with each tray containing 30 eggs. They sold the first batch of eggs in the Okaba District for a special price of IDR 90,000 per tray. They plan to raise the price to IDR 110,000 per tray to match local market trends.

This achievement is a significant step for YDML and the Okaba community. It helps support local food production, increases household income, and empowers women in Merauke, South Papua.

FROM LOCAL WISDOM TO DIGITAL IMPACT

A SANGGASE COMMUNITY UNITES AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE

On 31 July 2025, Yayasan Dahetok Milah Lestari officially concluded the Next Level Grant Facility – Voice for Just Climate Action (NLGF-VCA) project titled “Climate Change Campaign and Mitigation and Adaptation Based on Local Wisdom among the Malind Dek Community in Sanggase Village, Okaba District.”

This four-month initiative brought together Indigenous leaders, local authorities, and youth to transform traditional ecological wisdom into modern climate action. The program focused on strengthening community resilience through training sessions, FGDS, and mangrove planting, which resulted in the successful restoration of 335 mangrove seedlings across Sanggase’s coastal area.

A highlight of the project was YDML’s collaboration with Epen Cupen, a popular Papuan creative group, to produce an educational comedy video on climate adaptation. Blending humor with awareness, the video reached an impressive 850,265 views in just two months on Epen Cupen’s YouTube Channel. This amplified Indigenous climate voices beyond village borders and sparking nationwide conversations about adaptation and sustainability.

At the project's closing event, Village Head Mr. Yohanes Kilay conveyed his gratitude: “Sanggase has demonstrated that tradition and innovation can coexist. When our ancestral knowledge collaborates with new concepts, we protect land and our future.”

YDML Director Johan Andres Serhalawan added that the project’s success lies not only in community engagement but also in its digital reach.

“Through platforms like Epen Cupen, we connect local knowledge to a global audience, which shows that Indigenous communities are not passive victims of climate change but active agents of solution.”

The event concluded with a joint pledge from community members to continue mangrove conservation and develop climate education initiatives in neighbouring villages. The NLGF-VCA project stands as a model for combining local wisdom, creative communication, and sustainable environmental action. This reflects YDML’s ongoing mission to empower Indigenous communities through knowledge and collaboration.



ECONUSA MONITORS YDML'S COMMUNITY ECONOMIC PROGRAM IN STRENGTHENING INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN MERAUKE



On 7 August 2025, the EcoNusa Foundation conducted a monitoring and evaluation visit to YDML's Gallery in Merauke, South Papua. The visit focused on assessing the progress of the Indigenous Papuan Community Economic Development Program implemented by YDML and GPI Papua (BPE) under the Carbon Economic Value and Sustainable Livelihood Initiative.

The evaluation covered six Indigenous community groups supported by YDML in 2025:

- Egg-Laying Chicken Group in Okaba
- Coconut Shell Briquette Group in Okaba
- Cashew Nut Group in Soa, Tanah Miring
- Copra Group in Animha, Okaba, and Naukenjerai

Empowering Local Communities through Sustainable Livelihoods

The EcoNusa team reviewed YDML's progress report for February-July 2025, highlighting key achievements:

- The Egg-Laying Chicken Group in Okaba produced 60 eggs in July, their first harvest after receiving training and DOC chickens earlier this year, despite challenges in transportation and feed prices.

The Coconut Shell Briquette Group completed procurement and testing of their briquette machine, which was manufactured by Rumah Mesin Yogyakarta and transported via Surabaya to Merauke. While shipment to Okaba has been delayed due to high logistic costs, preparations for briquette production and training are underway.

- The Cashew Nut Group in Soa produced multiple product variants (chocolate, spicy, honey, and crispy flavours) and successfully supplied its products to EcoNusa's KOBUMI Gallery at Sorong Airport, Southwest Papua.

EcoNusa commended YDML's approach for combining economic empowerment, local wisdom, and women's participation, particularly in groups such as the Cashew Nut Soa, which comprises 11 women with one man member.

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Addressing Challenges and Strengthening Sustainability

During the joint discussion, several challenges were identified, including limited transport access, seasonal production constraints, and market monopoly issues in Okaba.

EcoNusa provided recommendations to strengthen YDML's long-term sustainability plan, such as:

- Improving product packaging and marketing strategies for local commodities.
- Diversifying income sources through downstream product innovation (e.g., coconut oil or processed briquettes).
- Strengthening local entrepreneurship and financial management capacity.



A Step Forward for the Indigenous Economy

The monitoring visit concluded with an agreement to support Phase II activities, which include briquette production training, workshops on banana and fish processing, and ongoing mentoring for existing groups.

YDML's Director, Johan Andres Serhalawan, expressed his gratitude and reaffirmed YDML's commitment:

"This collaboration with EcoNusa and GPI Papua reflects our shared belief that Indigenous communities can build a sustainable economy rooted in culture and nature. Each product, such as eggs, cashews, or briquettes, tells a story of resilience and transformation."

EcoNusa's representative added,

"YDML's integrated approach inspires how local initiatives can scale up to sustainable enterprises. It is not just about production, but it is about creating impact that lasts."

YDML SHARES INSIGHTS AT UNIVERSITAS MUSAMUS ON ACADEMIC FORUM

On August 29, 2025, YDML was invited to serve as a keynote speaker at the Second Academic Forum organized by the Student Executive Board (BEM) of Universitas Musamus Merauke, in partnership with Perkumpulan Sophia Nusantara and the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN). The forum focused on the theme “Research Discussion on the Social and Cultural Impacts of National Strategic Projects (PSN) in Merauke.”

As the first representative of a local Indigenous-led NGO to participate in this esteemed academic event, YDML presented findings and insights drawn from field experiences. The discussion highlighted the social and environmental challenges encountered by Indigenous Papuan communities, particularly in relation to the implications of national development programs.

The event focused on several key objectives:

- Gathering and discussing research findings related to the social and cultural impacts of large-scale development projects, particularly the PSN (Pembangunan Sumber Daya Alam) initiative, on Indigenous communities.
- Fostering dialogue among various stakeholders, including academics, students, civil society organizations, and government representatives.
- Generating recommendations and developing a policy brief aimed at mitigating the negative social and cultural effects of these development projects in Merauke.

Through its participation, YDML emphasized its commitment as a community-based organization, contributing to academic and policy discussions that integrate Indigenous perspectives with advocacy-focused research.



MONITORING VISIT TO ONGGAYA VILLAGE, NAUKENJERAI SUB-DISTRICT



On September 20, 2025, the YDML team conducted a monitoring visit to Onggaya Village in the Naukenjerai District as part of the ongoing Indigenous Papuan Community Economic Development Program. The main objective of this visit was to assess the progress of copra trading activities overseen by local women's and youth groups.

The YDML delegation, which included the Director, the Program Manager of the Indigenous Economic Development Program, and two Field Officers, met with the leaders of both women's and youth groups. This meeting was held at the residence of the women's group leader, situated in the back section of the village.

During the discussions, it was noted that the copra collected by both groups had been sold to local middlemen, which unfortunately prevented these groups being unable to fulfilling YDML's pending copra order. The monitoring also revealed the continued challenges faced by local producers in maintaining stable supply chains, limited access to transportation, and dependence on single buyers within the village.

YDML will continue to facilitate coordination with the groups so that the groups can transport copra to YDML's Gallery, and explore alternative marketing strategies to strengthen their bargaining power and ensure fairer trading practices for the communities in Naukenjerai.

