Indigenous Food and Health Programme

Local food, and the knowledge behind it, taking root again in two Uud Danum villages.

Yayasan Alam Sehat Lestari (ASRI) · Indonesia

December 2025 to June 2026 · Green Spark Fund, 1st Circle



Project Background

Nanga Jelundung and Rantau Malam are two Uud Danum villages in the forests of West Kalimantan, on the upper Kapuas River. The river once gave people clean water, food and a way to travel; illegal gold mining has polluted it. With markets far away and fewer traditional crops, many families now rely on packaged food that is low in nutrition, and child stunting and malnutrition have been rising. ASRI worked with both villages to bring local food plants, and the knowledge around them, back into daily life.

Who it was for

The Uud Danum communities of both villages, with a focus on women, children and youth. Together the two villages are home to 1,371 people (621 in Nanga Jelundung, 750 in Rantau Malam).

At a glance

87
community members trained

26
local food cadres mentored

21
cadres now using their skills (about 80%)

104
households taught by the cadres

4
harvests for the feeding programme

18
local food species planted in nurseries

85
local food species documented

1
Local Food Book published

What changed



Skills that stayed in the villages

87 people learned seedling propagation, sustainable cultivation and nursery management. 26 became local food cadres, and about 80% of them (around 21 people) now use these skills in practice. The cadres went on to teach 104 households: 59 in Nanga Jelundung and 45 in Rantau Malam.

Gardens that feed children

Community-managed local food gardens became a source of ingredients for the monthly supplementary feeding programme at Posyandu, the village health posts. Cadres harvested four times during the project. Demonstration beds were repaired after heavy rain, and 18 local food species were planted in the nurseries.





Local food knowledge, written down

85 local food species were documented in a new Local Food Book, *Tubuh Bumi Kita – Mengakar Bersama Pangan Lokal*. It features photographs and interviews with three women from different generations, and gives younger Indigenous people a way to learn their community's food traditions.

“The food around us has the potential to support family needs. We don't just see plants as something that grows in our neighborhood but also as part of the health, food, and family life. This activity makes us more motivated to protect the environment because for us, caring for nature means maintaining food sources and our own lives.”

Brasilia Florencia Neti, Village Chief of Nanga Jelundung

Why it matters

For the people of Nanga Jelundung and Rantau Malam, food has never been only food. It is health, family, and the knowledge that passes from one generation to the next. As the river was polluted and packaged food replaced traditional crops, that knowledge was slowly slipping away. Ask ASRI what made the difference, and the answer is simple: let the community lead. When people felt the work was theirs, it lasted.

Then the community's food knowledge was written down. The Local Food Book, *Tubuh Bumi Kita – Mengakar Bersama Pangan Lokal*, holds 85 local food species, with photographs and interviews with three women from different generations. It keeps what these women know, so younger people can learn it from them. It is the community's own record of its food traditions and heritage, there for the children who come next.

It was not always easy. Heavy rain damaged the garden beds, and low river levels made the villages hard to reach. The nurseries are still finding their feet, and local groups still need mentoring. But cadres and neighbours are taking over the gardens, their harvests keep feeding the monthly Posyandu programme for children, and ASRI will keep offering guidance where it can.

“This partnership gave us an opportunity to bring ideas that come from people's needs [into] real action for the community. Through this support, we were able to work closer with the community to recognize the potential of local food, building a seedbed and developing a family food garden.”

Muhammad Irfan Sudiansyah, ASRI BBBR Conservation Staff



A community member grows plants at home for household food security.



Organic farming training in Nanga Jelundung.



Organic farming practice session in Rantau Malam.



Organic farming practice session in Nanga Jelundung.

Implemented by Yayasan Alam Sehat Lestari (ASRI) with the communities of Nanga Jelundung and Rantau Malam. Supported by Communities for Nature through the Green Spark Fund. Photos: ASRI.