

AYA

NEVER GIVES UP

Part of a continuing series from the BOS foundation - shedding light on this critical issue. PROTECT, EDUCATE, DONATE AND CARE FOR WILDLIFE FOR OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE!



Contributing Author

MONTERADO FRIDMAN | Communication and Education Division Coordinator of Nyaru Menteng

Photography

INDRAYANA | Adoption Photo Coordinator of Nyaru Menteng.

Four years ago on the 14th May 2010, a resident of Hampalit village in Katingan Regency handed over an orangutan that he had been illegally keeping for several years to the BOS Foundation team at Nyaru Menteng.

Ayu, the female orangutan was aged around 5-6 years old and was in a very weak condition. Sitting enervated in a narrow wooden box, this sad young orangutan was paralyzed from the hip down. To move from one place to another, Ayu had to drag herself using the remaining strength in her arms. Her face was full of distrust and fear towards the humans around her.

A physical examination by vet Fransiska Sulistyو revealed that Ayu was also suffering from malnutrition. She weighed only 14 kg, much too light for an orangutan of her age. Her eyes indicated shortsightedness, the length of her limbs were disproportionate and her feet were disfigured and pointed inwards.

According to our Medical Team at Nyaru Menteng, her condition was likely a result of her being trapped in a narrow box for years without any opportunity to use her lower limbs. This subsequently resulted in disuse atrophy in both of her legs.

On May 17 2010, she was renamed Aya and started her new life in Nyaru Menteng. She spent her days in the clinic receiving intensive care and monitoring of her health using VetScan point-of-care diagnostics in the hope of improving her condition.

AYA'S SPIRIT

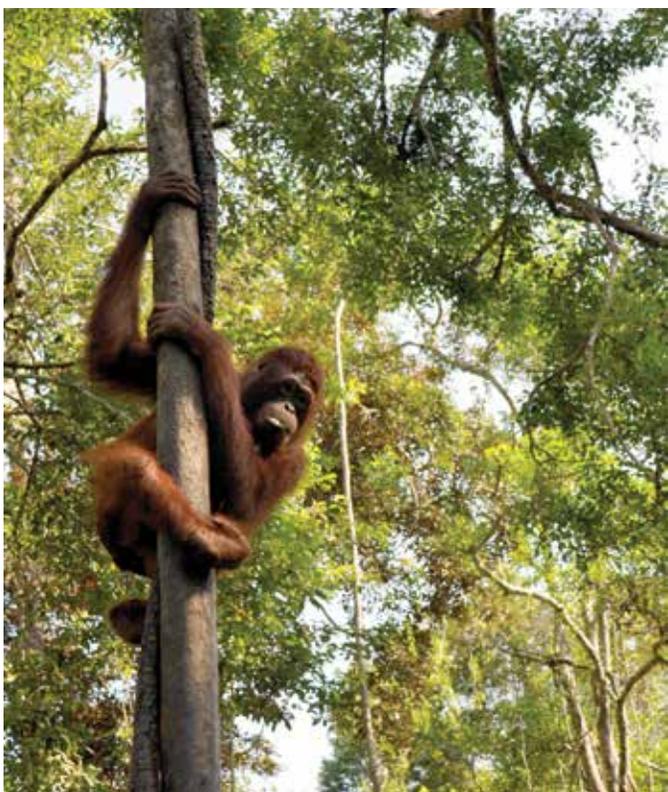
The Medical Team provided the best possible treatment for Aya. She received massage therapy for her leg muscles and feet, and also a highly nutritious diet. But all these interventions would have likely been in vain had it not been for Aya's amazing spirit.

In the beginning, Aya was reluctant to join her peers in the quarantine area. She spent her time alone and seeing this very lonely orangutan dragging her body to



move from one place to another was very hard for her babysitters and caregivers to watch. The Medical Team and her babysitters worked even harder to recover from her physical disabilities and improve her mental condition. August 2, 2010, was a milestone in Aya's life. She started Forest School, much to the joy of the whole team. She became more active and full of life. Her eating behavior improved and her unlimited will to learn resulted in a positive impact to her recovery process. Slowly, Aya started to climb trees of up to 5-7 meters. She climbed by pulling her body up using both of her arms, patiently one hand after the other, and gripping the tree trunk between her thighs.

Years passed by and Aya's spirit never ceased. Every day she learned with her peers in Forest School accompanied by babysitters and the Medical Team.



“Aya was suffering from chronic atrophy which is difficult to cure. But with the hardwork and efforts of the Medical Team along with the babysitters and technicians, and most importantly, Aya's spirit, now she is able to do many of the same activities as other orangutans without any significant difficulties. Thus we believe that her physical limitations will not be a great obstacle in her life in the future”

- Agus Fachroni (Veterinarian)

AYA'S TRANSFORMATION

In 2011, Aya continued to receive massage therapy to help the muscles in her legs recover. Despite her limitations, Aya improved in her tree climbing abilities. Sometimes she would fall, but she never stopped trying. In January 2012, Aya was finally promoted to join other orangutans in Group 1 Forest School since she was getting better at socialising. Despite moving slower than her friends, she attended school every day. In Forest School, and just like any other orangutan, she climbed and played. She was even growing a little mischievousness, and every day she took herself off and headed home earlier than the other orangutans to go to the playground. Sometimes she went to the Baby House and tried to open the door. If she made it, she would enter the enclosure full of fresh, clean leaves and take a nap.

In 2012, the massage therapy still continued. Her weight started to stabilize at a normal range and she rarely fell ill. Up until mid 2013, she received special attention to encourage her physical recovery and build her self confidence. The results are amazing. She now weighs 28 kg and the shy little Aya has transformed into a confident orangutan who has adapted well to her environment. She interacts well with other orangutans and under the care of babysitters, Aya is now capable of swinging from hanging roots and lianas. One of her favourite past times is relaxing on a branch with her legs hanging freely and her hands holding tightly on a branch. If another orangutan or a babysitter approaches her when she's busy playing, she will grimace baring

her teeth and throw branches showing her displeasure. However, she doesn't mind the company of other orangutans and loves to spend time with the younger ones. She is not yet able to make her own nest, but seeing her willingness to learn and independence we are convinced she will be able to do it someday.

"Aya was suffering from chronic atrophy which is difficult to cure. But with the hardwork and efforts of the Medical Team along with the babysitters and technicians, and most importantly, Aya's spirit, now she is able to do many of the same activities as other orangutans without any significant difficulties. Thus we believe that her physical limitations will not be a great obstacle in her life in the future," said vet Agus Fachroni who has been involved directly in Aya's treatment since the very beginning.

**INSPIRATION FOR THE BOS FOUNDATION'S TEAM:
ONGOING CARE AND DEDICATION**

Aya is not the only orangutan we care for with disabilities. There are more orangutans in our centers at both Nyaru Menteng and Samboja Lestari with physical limitations such as blindness, amputated limbs, or paralysis. Their determination to live has enabled them to overcome many of their disabilities and live as best as they can, like any of our able-bodied orangutans. Their spirit for life has inspired so many people, especially all of us who work for the BOS Foundation. Their amazing will to live makes us work even harder in caring for them; and to give them back the life and safety they deserve despite of all the challenges faced in conserving orangutans and their habitat.

We are immensely proud of the BOS Foundation team and their never-ending commitment and dedication to the mission. Despite the immense challenges, we never stop seeking solutions to improve the welfare and conservation prospects for orangutans. You can help us and make a difference today! <http://donation.orangutan.or.id/>

**PROTECT, EDUCATE, DONATE AND CARE
FOR WILDLIFE FOR OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE!**



CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS