



PRESS RELEASE

Improving Food Security: European Union and Penabulu Foundation Launch ECHO Green Project to Promote Inclusive Green Economy in Agriculture Sector

Jakarta, 16 October 2020. Penabulu Foundation together with the Consortium for Supporting Community-based Forest System Management (KpSHK), Indonesia NGO Council (Konsil LSM) and ICCO Cooperation launched today a project titled "**Promoting Green Economic Initiatives by Women and Youth Farmers in the Sustainable Agriculture Sector in Indonesia (ECHO Green)**".

The launch of the ECHO Green project, which coincides with World Food Day, is held in collaboration with the Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, the Ministry of Villages, Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration, the Ministry of Agriculture, and East Lombok District Government.

With financial support from the European Union worth €950,000 or IDR 16.6 billion, the ECHO Green project will enhance collaboration between the Government, civil society organisations (CSOs) and the private sector to introduce sustainable agricultural practices and to ensure the involvement of women and young farmers in village spatial and land-use planning.

The project will give technical support to 120 CSOs, 100 women farmers, 100 young farmers, and 100 villages in eight sub-districts in three districts in Indonesia, namely Padang Pariaman (West Sumatra), Grobogan (Central Java) and East Lombok (West Nusa Tenggara). The project will be completed by 2022.

Eko Komara, Director of Penabulu Foundation, expressed support for innovative green economy with women and young people at the forefront. "ECHO Green can be used as a learning medium for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the regions. Women and young people have an important role in the field of empowering human resources, and are the motor of development in the era of Information Technology 4.0. ECHO Green has an ambition to improve the green economy, especially in agriculture as a mainstay sector for creating sustainable jobs, realising food sovereignty and sustainability, and introducing a more inclusive approach for all parties," said Eko.

Dida Suwarida, the National Programme Manager of ECHO Green, said that the project will utilise digital technology to introduce the Green Economy concept to the beneficiaries in Padang Pariaman, East Lombok and Grobogan Regencies. "The corona virus poses a risk to the community. The virus outbreak convinced us that women and young people must take a role in securing our future. Without optimising digital technology, the pandemic will lead to a lack of interest in sustainable agriculture as well as halt the distribution and chain of production, marketing and consumption," said Dida.

In the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2020-2024, the government noted the issue of rising food demand as the population increases by 1.2 percent. However, relatively low productivity and price fluctuations have resulted in low bargaining power of farmers. The ECHO Green project aligns itself with the national development priority agenda for 2020-2024, especially:



- Strategy 6.2.2 Increasing the role and representation of women in politics and development;
- Strategy 6.3.3 Sustainable management of natural resources and the environment, and spatial planning in rural areas; and
- Strategy 6.9.9 Increase the participation of young people in development.

The support from Regencies of Padang Pariaman, Grobogan and East Lombok bring added value in the achievement of the ECHO Green's objectives.

“The strategy and concept of ECHO Green are in line with the target of East Lombok as defined in the district plan, which is how to utilise local potentials such as fisheries, agriculture and tourism so as to stimulate an inclusive and sustainable economy,” said H.M. Juaini Taofik, District Secretary of East Lombok Region.

Meanwhile, the Head of Regional Development Planning Agency (BAPPEDA) of Grobogan Regency, Anang Armunanto, said that the ECHO Green project is essential for Grobogan as it will encourage and empower women and young people to work in the agricultural sector as the mainstay sector in Grobogan. “It is hoped that the project can develop their interests and technical skills in the sector,” said Anang.

Similarly, Yurisman, Head of Department of Agriculture and Food Security of Padang Pariaman District, stated, “The ECHO Green project is in line with what is being carried out by the Agriculture and Food Security Department of Padang Pariaman District. It is hoped that valuable lessons learned from the project will improve the welfare of farmers,” said Yurisman.

“The European Union is proud to support this project in three regencies in West Sumatra, Central Java and West Nusa Tenggara. For us, an inclusive green economy is part of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By applying the green, inclusive economy principles to agriculture, you will increase agricultural productivity, create income, and reduce inequality and poverty,” said EU Ambassador Vincent Piket. “Women and young farmers are playing a key role in the local agriculture communities. Training them in modern agriculture techniques will improve food security and nutrition. It will also help make agriculture sustainable for the long run. In this way the new project will produce direct benefits for the citizens of Padang Pariaman, Grobogan and East Lombok,” he added.

About European Union

The European Union (EU) is an economic and political union of 27 Member States. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. In 2012, the EU was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for advancing the causes of peace, reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe. The EU is the largest trade block in the world, as well as the world's largest source and destination of foreign direct investment. Collectively, the EU and its Member States are the largest donor of Official Development Assistance (ODA), providing more than half of ODA globally.



This project is co-funded by
the European Union

ECHO GREEN



About Penabulu Foundation

The Penabulu Foundation was founded in 2003 and since then has dedicated itself to strengthening the capacity of civil society in Indonesia through empowerment and sustainability of the position and role of civil society organisations in Indonesia with efforts to strengthen organisational capacities and capabilities; mobilisation, management and distribution of resources; developing equal partnerships between actors and development sector as well as mobilising the widest possible public participation and involvement.

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