**PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
**Citibank, N.A., Indonesia**
**25 July 2025**

# Seeds of Change: Soe's Young Farmers Cultivate Nutrition and Opportunity with Plan Indonesia and Citi Indonesia

**Soe, July 25, 2025** – The Soe City in South Central Timor Regency is known as one of the areas with the highest stunting rate (24.2%) in East Nusa Tenggara (BPS NTT, 2024). The National Food Agency also noted that, in general, NTT is among regions vulnerable in food usage, with 21.86% of its toddler population (71,372) being underweight (BPN, 2025).

Building on this background, the Youth-Led Agri-Food (YLAF) program, implemented by Yayasan Plan International Indonesia (Plan Indonesia) and supported by Citi Foundation, is hoped to emerge as a solution to nutrition and economy opportunities in Soe. As many as 411 YLAF participants from 39 business groups held the Harvest Festival on Wednesday (July 23, 2025), producing 528 kg (half a ton) of vegetables such as mustard greens, bok choy, broccoli, tomatoes, and carrots, 84 kg of chicken eggs, and approximately 10 kg of catfish.

**Dini Widiastuti, Executive Director of Plan Indonesia**, explained that the YLAF Harvest Festival reflected the transformation of young people in Soe over the past year. "Most YLAF participants previously had no knowledge of agriculture or livestock farming. Some of them previously had no income at all. After participating in YLAF, they can manage their own businesses or join groups, and can now support themselves and their families," said Dini at the Harvest Festival in Soe on Wednesday (July 23, 2025).

The agricultural entrepreneurship training program YLAF supported by Citi Foundation has been running from 2024 to 2025 in Soe, with the aim to equip at least 400 young people with agricultural or livestock skills. As part of the Global Innovation Challenge initiated by the Citi Foundation, YLAF's mission is also to equip communities with the skills to nurture food security in the far future.

**Hario Widyananto, Country Head of Public Affairs for Citi Indonesia**, stated that the success of the Harvest Festival illustrates how collaboration between humanitarian organizations and businesses can bring broader benefits to surrounding communities. "Citi is always committed to actively contribute to communities wherever we operate, including Indonesia. The YLAF program, supported by Citi Foundation, is one of many efforts that is aligned with the government's commitment to boost productivity in agriculture and livestock, encouraging a sustainable national food security. Aside from helping build a more robust food system, we hope that our collaboration can inspire more industry players to unite and find innovative solutions that can help marginalized groups, including the youths in Soe, find their opportunity and become part of a productive society," Wiwid said.

By the end of the Harvest Festival, YLAF alongside Citi Foundation and Citi Indonesia had supported 411 young people in establishing businesses in agriculture, egg-laying chickens, or catfish. A total of 1,008 parents and young people had also participated in its stunting prevention activities, implemented through joint-socialization programs with community health centers (Puskesmas) or local community leaders.

On the Harvest Festival, the foods produced by young farmers (18-29 years old) will be sold through independently managed nutrition kiosks, local vendors, or directly to the communities closest to the farming fields. Aside from that, 10 nutrition kiosks or food sales outlets had been established and operated by young people throughout the program.

In total, YLAF participants had attracted 1,825 buyers from various locations, with 23% of them being pregnant women or parents of children under two years old. Sales of agricultural and livestock products helped YLAF participants generate a varied gross income, ranging from IDR 600,000 to IDR

492 million per year, depending on the scale of their business and their success. All of these achievements are included as Plan Indonesia's contribution to the fulfilment of sustainable development goals (SDGs), including goal 2 (to end hunger, achieve food security), goal 4 (inclusive and equal quality education), goal 5 (gender equality), and goal 8 (supporting inclusive and sustainable economic growth).

Adi (29), a housewife raising her child and with 11 siblings, said her economic situation had improved after participating in YLAF. Although previously unable to farm, Adi now cultivates four acres of land on her own and earns a gross income of up to IDR 10 million per harvest cycle (approximately three months). She also earns income from selling eggs with her group.

"This income is very useful for meeting family needs. I can give pocket money to my younger siblings and children, while saving the remaining money to buy seeds," said Adi.

After the Harvest Festival, the participants will continue to train under the YLAF program and attend business mentoring processes until the program ends in December 2025.

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**About Citi Foundation**

The Citi Foundation works to promote economic progress and improve the lives of people in low-income communities around the world. We invest in efforts that increase financial inclusion, catalyze job opportunities for youth, and reimagine approaches to building economically vibrant communities. The Citi Foundation's "More than Philanthropy" approach leverages the enormous expertise of Citi and its people to fulfill our mission and drive thought leadership and innovation. For more information, visit www.citifoundation.com.

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In Indonesia, Citi was established since 1968 and is one of the country's largest foreign banks. Citi Indonesia now operates with a refined focus, maintaining four branches in four major cities in Indonesia, namely Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya, and Medan.

In 2025, Citi Indonesia received prestigious awards, such as Best Corporate and Institutional Adviser, Best Bond Adviser – International, Best Commercial Bank, Best Social Loan, Best Bank Bond, Best Syndicated Loan – Mining, Best Syndicated Loan – Agriculture from The Asset.

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**About Yayasan Plan International Indonesia (Plan Indonesia)**
Since 1969, Plan International has operated in Indonesia; in 2017, it changed its name to the Yayasan Plan International Indonesia (Plan Indonesia). We seek to advance girls' equality and realize children's rights. We also work with young people to enable meaningful engagement in life decisions.

Plan Indonesia, a subsidiary of Plan International Inc., runs a major child sponsorship program. In East Nusa Tenggara, Plan Indonesia has fostered 32,000 boys and girls with five pledges to uphold their fundamental rights: the right to birth certificates, essential vaccinations, clean water, sanitation, and cleanliness, as well as education. Plan Indonesia operates in eight provinces through programs with the main goal to build a Healthy, Educated, Empowered, Safe and Resilient Generation.

These initiatives seek to strengthen the ability of social movements to engage and focus on 3 million girls to have equal representation, equal power, and equal freedom.
For further details: plan-international.or.id

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