**1st ASEAN Village Network Meeting Discusses Framework, Action Plan**

Indonesia hosted the 1st ASEAN Village Network Meeting series on 25—26 July in Yogyakarta. The event was opened by Abdul Halim Iskandar, Minister of Villages, Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration. It was attended by Senior Village Development Officials (SOMRDPE) and village representatives from ASEAN member countries. The meeting is a follow-up to the Joint Statement on the Establishment of the ASEAN Village Network which was agreed upon by ASEAN leaders at the 42nd ASEAN Summit in Labuan Bajo in May. One of the meeting’s main agenda was the ASEAN Village Network Framework.

The framework will be one of the documents to be signed by the ASEAN leaders at the 43rd ASEAN Summit in Jakarta in September. The framework includes platforms of the meeting, action plans including timelines, and expected results from the ASEAN Village Network. The meeting also discussed the ASEAN Village Network Work Plan which contains concrete activities and programs for ASEAN villages.

The ASEAN Village Network aims to provide a platform for community and inclusive participation so that villages can contribute to and benefit from development; facilitate collaboration and cooperation between villages to support village transformation; and facilitate rural products' access to regional and international markets. The ASEAN Village Network also eyed to strengthen the ASEAN identity in village communities.

In his remarks, Minister  Abdul Halim Iskandar said that the meeting is vital for the development of villages in Indonesia and in all ASEAN member countries. He hoped that the meeting could become a catalyst for village transformation in ASEAN.

During the ASEAN Village Network, several events were organized, including the ASEAN Collaborative Forum on Localizing the 2030 SDGs at the Village Level and the ASEAN Rural Culture Expo in the Framework of ASEAN Identity. The expo was held in Sambirejo Village, Sleman Regency, Yogyakarta. It was attended by village representatives from Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam. The participants showcased the products of each village. Indonesia was represented by nine villages from West Java, Central Java, Bali, West Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, West Nusa Tenggara, and Bangka Belitung.