

Rebuilding Better: Fostering Business Resilience Post-COVID-19 Project

Supporting Women Entrepreneurs in South-East Asia

► Results at a glance



Assisting women entrepreneurs impacted by COVID-19



1,100+

small businesses connected with relevant business development and financial support services.



130+

online and in-person activities organized for small businesses.



24

new resources made available to entrepreneurs and small business owners.



Connecting women entrepreneurs with partners and services



30+

partners mobilized to provide financial services, market information and networks.



15+

capacity-building workshops organized for partners.



5

multinational companies engaged to provide support to women entrepreneurs.



Advocating for opportunities for women entrepreneurs



100,000+

individuals reached through project activities, advocacy and awareness-raising initiatives.



7

events to initiate dialogues on women entrepreneurs' needs and solutions.



3

new publications on women's entrepreneurship development disseminated and promoted.

► Feedback from partners and women entrepreneurs

■ I learned a lot of extremely useful tips on how to improve my business. I would definitely recommend this training to anyone.

Woman entrepreneur from the Philippines

■ Together with the ILO Rebuilding Better Project, we have assisted women entrepreneurs in Thailand impacted by COVID-19 and expanded our service offering to this particular group during a difficult time.

Kornchai Kaewmahawong, Council Member, Employers' Confederation of Thailand

■ It's an insightful programme for women to understand each other in times of challenge. I realized I'm not alone!

Woman entrepreneur from Malaysia

■ We are honoured to collaborate with the ILO to support women entrepreneurs in South-East Asia, especially those who have been hit hardest by the pandemic.

Ryan Rahardjo, Head of Public Affairs, South-East Asia, Google



► Selected partners of the Rebuilding Better Project





► What next?

During 18 months of implementation, the Rebuilding Better Project has successfully mobilized and established new partnerships, initiated dialogue on women's entrepreneurship development, as well as developed and tested new tools, guides and approaches.

Nevertheless, the complexity of the issues facing women entrepreneurs and the economy at large, persist and further necessitates the need for support. The ILO is committed to continuing alongside development cooperation partners to:

1. Ensure a more gender-inclusive policy and regulatory environment

There is potential to integrate more specific strategies to support women's entrepreneurship in some national development plans and policies. In order to effectively contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (5 & 8), the ILO aims to:

- **Assist ministries and government agencies in undertaking evidence-based research** to identify gaps and opportunities of existing policies and revise them with a view to eliminate any barriers to women's entrepreneurship.
- **Strengthen the capacity of stakeholders such as employers' organizations and women's entrepreneurship associations to advocate and support** programmes and projects that effectively advance women's entrepreneurship development as an important avenue for greater economic growth, inclusiveness and social well-being.
- **Support the creation of spaces for national and regional policy dialogues where stakeholders can share successful practices and lessons learned**, and women's entrepreneurship development continues to be considered as a viable avenue for a human-centred and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Enhance women entrepreneurs' access to gender-responsive business development and financial support services

Women entrepreneurs in South-East Asia continue to rely on business development and financial services that are tailored to their unique needs. However, services providers in the region face capacity and knowledge gaps that hinder their ability to offer gender-responsive support. Hence, the ILO sees the need to:

- **Further build the capacity of organizations in the enterprise ecosystem to cater to women entrepreneurs.** By leveraging tools and approaches like the [ILO WE-Check](#) and others, organizations would be able to gain insights on how they can better design and deliver support services to women entrepreneurs.
- **Continue to support service providers to innovate, adapt and integrate training packages and other support services** (coaching, networking, reference systems, etc.) to women entrepreneurs.
- **Support closer ties, collaboration and co-creation of service providers in order to offer bundled services to women entrepreneurs** that respond to both their financial and non-financial needs.