



ASIAN WOMEN

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS
NETWORK CONFERENCE
REPORT 2015

ORGANIZED BY

Association for the Promotion
of the Status of Women
in collaboration with re:terra

SUPPORTED BY

The Nippon Foundation



re:terra



ABOUT

We are a network dedicated to enabling women to build successful social enterprises.

Women social entrepreneurs are developed to their full potential and lead their enterprises in a very supportive ecosystem, thereby, being at the forefront in the contribution towards the economic growth, alleviation of social problems and narrowing the gaps between men and women for a more equitable society. Asian Women Social Entrepreneurs Network is a learning community that empowers women social entrepreneurs through knowledge, inspiration and alliances to reach their full potential. More specifically, the network aims to provide effective communication channels for capacity building through exchanges and sharing among current and future social entrepreneurs, and create and advocate for supportive ecosystem for women social entrepreneurs.

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BANGKOK, THAILAND

20-22 MAY, 2015



PROGRAM

20
M A Y

- 1. Opening
- 2. Introduction of participants / overview of the seminar
- 3. Photo session and refreshments
- 4. Social entrepreneurship: Global and regional trends
- 5. Getting to business: Business Model Canvas
- 6. Sharing experiences: Challenges and Turning Points
- 7. Welcome Reception

21
M A Y

- 1. Scaling up: Opportunities and Challenges
- 2. Innovative financing models
- 3. Social enterprise Financing: ARUN experiences
- 4. Marketing innovation
- 5. Panel discussion: Sharing marketing experiences

22
M A Y

- 1. AWSEN network session
 - 2. Reflections and future collaboration
 - 3. Closing ceremony: Certificate giving
- Afternoon session**
(Venue: C asean, Ratchadapisek Road)
- 1. Open Forum
 - 2. Keynote speech on Women's Economic Empowerment
 - 3. Meeting Women Social Entrepreneurs from the Mekong Subregion

SUMMARY

DAY1

*“ Lesson learned from last year...there is a lack of policies known to actively support **WOMEN** in their social endeavors in the Mekong sub-region. Tacking social problems is best through **empowering communities** and **building networks of social enterprises.** ”*

- Dr. Maytinee Bhongsvej



In the morning, participants greeted each other and representatives provided updates on women social entrepreneurs in each country. Representatives from Thailand and Vietnam shared that social enterprise related laws will be established soon. Myanmar and Cambodia had been enhancing the support system in the third sector, while Laos had created a network amongst the women entrepreneurs. In the afternoon, participants worked on their “business canvas.” The reception was held at the Cabbage and Condoms restaurant where Dr. Mechai Viravaidya the head of the largest NPO in Thailand, PDI, shared the importance of inviting private sector partnership.

DAY2

Specialists in management (Jane Donaldson), investment (ARUN), finance (YUNUS Center), and design and marketing (Ka na ta, Jim Thompson, Alexander Lameont) shared their experience and knowledge. Energetic discussions emerged between guest speakers and participants after each session. Brand managers and designers gave specific advice about the products the entrepreneurs presented.

*“**GENDER** does matter in business.... The question is **whether you are ready to scale**”*

- Jane Donaldson (Management Consultant)

*“Break out from the dependency on government subsidies. Regulations are becoming friendlier and banks are **exploring Find an opportunity, and know that help is available.** ”*

- Dr. Faiz Shah (Director, Yunus Center, Asian Institute of Technology)





“ Everything you do is **BRANDING.** ”

- Alexandra Lamont (Operation Director, Alexander Lamont)



“ What we have valued the most is the **QUALITY.** The quality of the product, and quality of **LIFE** of our employees ”

- Ms. Chutima Dumsuwan
(Communication Director, Jim Thompson)

DAY3

After reviewing the three days, members came up with proposals to support fellow social entrepreneurs in their own countries. Events will take place in each country beginning in the fall. The head of Nippon Foundation, Mr. Takeju Ogata, visited and spoke about how APSW and the AWSEN network can always serve as a resource for women social entrepreneurs who strive to make changes in society.

In the afternoon, a public session was held in collaboration with C asean, a new co-creating space for arts, business and culture. Ms. Roberta Clarke from UN Women gave a speech and entrepreneurs presented their businesses. A diverse group of people attended the session. AWSEN and C asean look forward to collaborating in the future.



“ Please first pour **LOVE** into your **products.** Then a creative way to tell to the market will open.”

- Tetsuo Kato (CEO of H2X / Designer at Ka na ta)

“ Focus on your **UNIQUENESS** and **STRENGTH.**”

- Mr. Pen Timol (Investment Officer, ARUN Cambodia)

UN MOWEN

UN Women extends its congratulations to the Asian Women Social Entrepreneurs Network (AWSEN), on its important work to promote the value of social entrepreneurship while it supports the capacity development of women entrepreneurs.

Through the work that you promote, the dividends are obvious. You advance women’s economic empowerment through advocating for equality of opportunities for women to participate in and benefit from economic growth. This is essential to realizing gender equality. In addition, we know that families and communities reap a substantial benefit when women have avenues for decent work as women are likely to use much of all their earnings and increased bargaining power to buy goods and services that improve family’s welfare. And in the case of social enterprises, we can say that there is a further benefit as your work contributes to community and social wellbeing.

UN Women looks forward to strengthening our cooperation and to supporting AWSEN.



Ms. Roberta Clarke (Regional Director, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific)

VOICES OF PARTICIPANTS

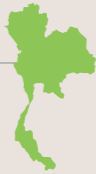


Anna Biak
(Founder of Aidii)

Reenergize the weaving community to preserve the Chin traditional dresses and colors in Myanmar.



“I felt like I found myself again. The conference reminded me that my work is about art meeting business, and that I should keep believing that the two can go together”



“I learned a lot from the experiences of fellow participants and distinguished speakers. Thanks to people I met in this seminar, I learned the potential of our product and gain ideas about how to develop it”



Azma Naksewee
Founder of WO-MANIS

Produce scarfs involving Muslim widows who lost their husbands due to the conflict in Southern Thailand.

SENDAI, JAPAN
25 SEPTEMBER, 2015



Emerging Women Entrepreneurs Forum Sendai
“ I Change! Society Change! ”

While surrounded by abundant, nature, Sendai faces numerous social issues including population decline, aging population and decline in industries, issues that other societies will also be facing in the future. Soon after the Great East Japan Earthquake hit, women in the region, despite all sorts of difficulty have been trying to create businesses to make living in their hometown. Four years have past since, and such businesses faces challenges to sustain. Supporting organizations to these business are trying to find out the most effective way and structure to help the entrepreneurs realize their vision.

Women entrepreneurs invited from Asia (Myanmar), Africa (Cameroon) and Central America (El Salvador) for Emerging Women Entrepreneurs Forum also initiate businesses and try helping local communities that are experiencing natural disasters and political instability. These women entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs in Tohoku area Japan shared their businesses, its difficulties and opportunities, and exchanged opinions at the talk session.

Speakers

- Khin Thet Maw (Myanmar)
- Audrey Chicot (Cameroon)
- Lourdes Maria Mena de Guerra (El Salvador)

Program

1. Presentation by Women Entrepreneurs
2. Around Table Discussion with Intermediate organizations in Tohoku



“ Remember that **WE ARE ALL HUMAN BEINGS.**
For me, the people I work with are all human,
not male or female. I treat them just the same.”

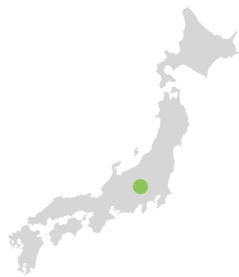
- Audrey Chicot (Cameroon)



Following the session, the invited entrepreneurs visited Ishinomaki-city, one of the most affected cities by the great tsunami in 2011, with the greatest number of victims and damage to the land. They visited local co-working spaces and organizations that are providing support to the entrepreneurs.

The forum provided some hints for entrepreneurs both from Tohoku and from around the world. Tohoku entrepreneurs and an entrepreneur from Cameroon working on poverty eradication decided they will initiate and continue on cultural and economical exchange.

UEDA, JAPAN
26 SEPTEMBER, 2015



Emerging Women Entrepreneurs Forum Ueda
“ New Workstyle, and Diverse
Human Resource Management ”

Shinshu is currently facing rapid population decline, losing approximately 10,000 people annually, and quantitative expansion is no longer effective while new social issues keep arising. In Shinshu today, it is crucial that each individuals create values that would appeal to the world, for its community to thrive and survive. The community is required to offer diverse work-styles to allow individuals to perform their abilities to their fullest and this should lead to a sustaining society.

Entrepreneurs from Asia (Vietnam), Africa (Ethiopia) and Central America (Costa Rica) visited the area. They are entrepreneurs that protect their own community built upon its history and culture, and they do so by initiating businesses that transform their community’s core values into a newer, more suited form to the generation. They exchanged ideas and experiences with entrepreneurs based in Nagano, and Deputy Governor of Nagano Prefecture who herself tries creating new way of working in Nagano, on the theme of “Workstyle in the New Age” and “Diverse Human Resource Management.”

Speakers

- Ha Thi thu Nguyen (Vietnam)
- Fikirte Addis (Ethiopia)
- Rebeca Bolaños Cubillo (Costa Rica)

Program

1. Presentation by Women Entrepreneurs
2. Comments from Ms.Nakajima, Deputy Governor of Nagano Prefecture and Mr.Kato, CEO of H2X
3. Panal Talk



“ We don’t have enough opportunities to see
how others are living, how different our lives are;
we can't love our society. Our job is to **MAKE
YOU SEE DIFFERENCES.**”

- Ha Thi thu Nguyen (Vietnam)



At the session, the women-entrepreneurs from around the world emphasized that being successful on what they love, and having a personal life such as being a wife and a mother are all equally important in their life, and that women should not have to give up one for the other. If the work-style they desire is not there, the best option is to create one; the key is to find resources locally and work with communities.

The women entrepreneurs visited initiatives such as silk weaving workshop, and food salon, to understand the cultural, natural and human resources, and the way they are utilized to build a sustaining society in Shinshu,

TOKYO, JAPAN
28 SEPTEMBER, 2015

Emerging Women Entrepreneurs Forum Ochanomizu
“ Thinking of Global Leadership ”



Where Entrepreneurship meets Academia

Diversity in career paths is required today. EWEF Ochanomizu took place at Ochanomizu University, for the purpose of reaching out to the “out of classroom” opportunities at university,



Speakers

- Khin Thet Maw (Myanmar)
- Audrey Chicot (Cameroon)
- Lourdes Maria Mena de Guerra (El Salvador)
- Ha Thi thu Nguyen (Vietnam)
- Fikirte Addis (Ethiopia)
- Rebeca Bolaños Cubillo (Costa Rica)

Program

1. Presentation by Women Entrepreneurs
2. Inspiration Talk by Prof.Sunada
3. Workshop
4. Sharing Session of Workshop

“ Studying is not enough. I gained experience on how to run a business organization through working. I was only 22 years old when I started, and I gained many opportunities from the situation. I ALWAYS TRIED TO LEARN FROM SITUATIONS.”

- Khin Thet Maw (Myanmar)

About forty women, including students and veteran entrepreneurs gathered to the forum. First three women entrepreneurs from Africa, Asia and Central America introduced their businesses and what their current difficulties and opportunities are. Participants then discussed about the possible collaboration between enterprises and academics. Some of the opinions included;

- It is crucial to allow different values and diversity through a wide network in order to harness entrepreneurship.
- Confidence is the key
- Passion is the most important thing when it comes to entrepreneurship

They also discussed about the role of higher education to improve the social status of women, and about the importance of universities as a platform to foster diversity in society.



Emerging Women Entrepreneurs Forum Shibuya
“ Seeking Future Business ”

There is an increasing need for women social entrepreneurs to network and connect today. To this end, a forum took place at Shibuya Hilarie to provide much needed “meeting place” for women entrepreneurs to share their experiences and exchange opinions.



“ DESIGN IS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL CHANGE. The secret to success is to focus on one design at a time. Research what the market needs and apply on the design.”

- Lourdes Maria Mena de Guerra (El Salvador)

Speakers

- Khin Thet Maw (Myanmar)
- Audrey Chicot (Cameroon)
- Lourdes Maria Mena de Guerra (El Salvador)
- Ha Thi thu Nguyen (Vietnam)
- Fikirte Addis (Ethiopia)
- Rebeca Bolaños Cubillo (Costa Rica)

Program

1. Key Note Remarks
2. Remarks From Organizers
Japan International Corporation Agency,
The Nippon Foundation and Asian Women
Social Entrepreneurs Network
3. Screening
4. Panel Discussion
 - A. The Insights and Findings from Mlyagi and Nagano event
 - B. Possibilities of collaboration with Women Entrepreneursfor creating BOP Business

Ms. Kayoko Fukushima, Director of UN Women Japan gave a keynote talk. She emphasized the importance of creating work opportunities that are appealing to women. Following the keynote address, Keiko Hamada, the chief editor of one of the most popular news magazine AERA, moderated the panel session. Women entrepreneurs from around the three continents joined the panel. They presented their business and shared their experiences and observations from the seminars and excursions.

Japanese companies Ajinomoto and JCB also joined the session and shared their experiences from their businesses in Ghana and Morocco, which involve local women employment. They discussed the importance of collaboration between Japanese organizations and local enterprises to overcome barriers like economic status or gender.



BANGKOK, THAILAND

19-21 NOVEMBER, 2015



PROGRAM

19
NOV

- 1. Opening
- 2. Introduction of participants / overview of the seminar
- 3. Photo session and refreshments
- 4. Social entrepreneurship: Global, regional and local trends
- 5. Getting to business: Business Model Canvas
- 6. Sharing experiences: Challenges and Turning Points
- 7. Welcoming dinner at Tewi Boutique Hotel

20
NOV

- 1. Social business and innovative social enterprise financing
- 2. Sustaining social enterprise through branding
- 3. Panel discussion: Sharing branding experiences
- 4. Social Innovation / Creative Communication
- 5. Social entrepreneurs using ICT / social media to change lives

21
NOV

- 1. Reflections and future collaboration / AWSEN network
- 2. Closing
- Afternoon session**
 - 1. Open Forum
 - 2. Welcoming remarks
 - 3. Keynote speech on “Women Economic Empowerment in ASEAN”
 - 4. Special talk on “Women Entrepreneurs”
 - 5. Meeting Women Social Entrepreneurs from some ASEAN countries
 - 6. Products display and sales



SUMMARY

DAY1

*“ Promoting **WOMEN’S** economic empowerment, through social enterprise as context, is **another new venture.** ”*

- Dr. Maytinee Bhongsvej



In the morning, following the remarks and participants' greetings each other and remarks, panelists summarized the current situation of social enterprises including. This included the research about the eco system and the regulations amongin ASEAN; mainly about, focusing on Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia and Cambodia. In response to these presentations, the leading womanfemale entrepreneur in Vietnam emphasized the importance to have theof having initiatives in each country in order to create ato network and facilitate the creation of regional hub for networkhub. The afternoon started with participants' the framing and clarifyingclarification of the Business Model Canvas. Based on the findings, the participants went into the discussiondiscussed and shared their business experiences. A welcome dinner was held at the Tewa Boutique Hotel.

DAY2

Specialists in finance (Asian Institute of Technology), branding (SHE (Thailand) Company Ltd), design (Creative Move) and ICT (NEEDeed Foundation and Code for Tokyo) shared their experience and knowledge. The specialists encouraged participants to reflect and reinforce the significance of their product / service value and provided information on how to access the necessary technology. The social entrepreneurs who have been successful with branding exchanged their opinions on business. A discussion followed the session.



*“ **BE DIFFERENT.** ”*

- Ms Janjaree Thanma (SHE Company Ltd)

*“People say that the world is getting worse; dangerous, selfish... but at the same time **we** are finding the ways to change.”*

- Dr. Faiz Shah (Director, Yunus Center, Asian Institute of Technology)



“ *Training is not an end, TRAINING MUST BE REPETITIVE.*”

- Ms Janet Chong (The Truly Loving Company)

“ *We believe CREATIVITY; art and design can CHANGE THE WORLD.*”

- Mr Thanaboon Somboon (Creative Move)

“ *It’s a fulfilling feeling to be a social entrepreneur, and to be able to ADVOCATE SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES.*”

- Ms Sarah Claudio (Investment Officer, ARUN Cambodia)

“ *Let us think HOW TECHNOLOGY CAN CHANGE OUR COMMUNICATION.*”

- Ms Mami Enomoto (Code for Tokyo)



DAY3

To finish the morning session in APSW, members from each country reflected on the three-day session. Each participant received a certification. In the afternoon, the Open Forum was held in C asean. Ms. Kanda Vajrabhaya, of the ASEAN Committee on Protection of the Rights of Women Children, gave the keynote speech. This was followed by the presentations of Ms. Marisara Satrulee (C asean) about the platform for women entrepreneurs, and of Dr. Contiki Phusawat (Kasetsart University) about how he helped schools to start social enterprises. At the second part of the forum, the seminar participants each presented their businesses. The forum was closed with all parties AWSEN, C asean, and participants looking forward to future collaborations. Everyone then enjoyed seeing the displays and shopping for products from the presented social enterprises.



ASEAN COMMITTEE ON PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Ms. Kanda Vajrabhaya, from the ASEAN Committee on Protection of the Rights of Women and Children, delivered the keynote speech on “Women Economic Empowerment in ASEAN”. She described how women empowerment could progress, not solely in the economic aspect but also in the systematic side. She cited some examples of women in business in Cambodia, Myanmar and Malaysia.

“Although women play a key role for national development, barriers still remain. Women entrepreneurs have a lot to encounter when they decide to become involved in business. Tackling these challenges is not easy, but there are possible solutions. One solution is providing access to credit for women who seek fair and equal treatment. Facilitating startups with a business-friendly environment is another way. Improving support services by giving women better access to information technology is also a solution. Even if we have challenges on one side, we have opportunities on the other side. It’s time to realize that the opportunities are open. Networking is the key for taking advantage of opportunities. Through networking we have the ability to help ourselves with our endeavor.”

ASEAN Committee on Protection of the Rights of Women and Children looks forward to strengthening our cooperation and to supporting AWSSEN.



Ms Kanda Vajrabhaya (ASEAN Committee on Protection of the Rights of Women and Children)

VOICES OF PARTICIPANTS



Ms. Ngoc Hang Nguyen

Program coordinator of REACH, providing vocational training for hair dressing for the disadvantaged. She plans to open a beauty salon in 2016.



“Before I came here it was just a simple idea to open up a salon. By learning knowledges and experiences of others, my business idea is getting clearer. I’ve come up with the new ideas.”



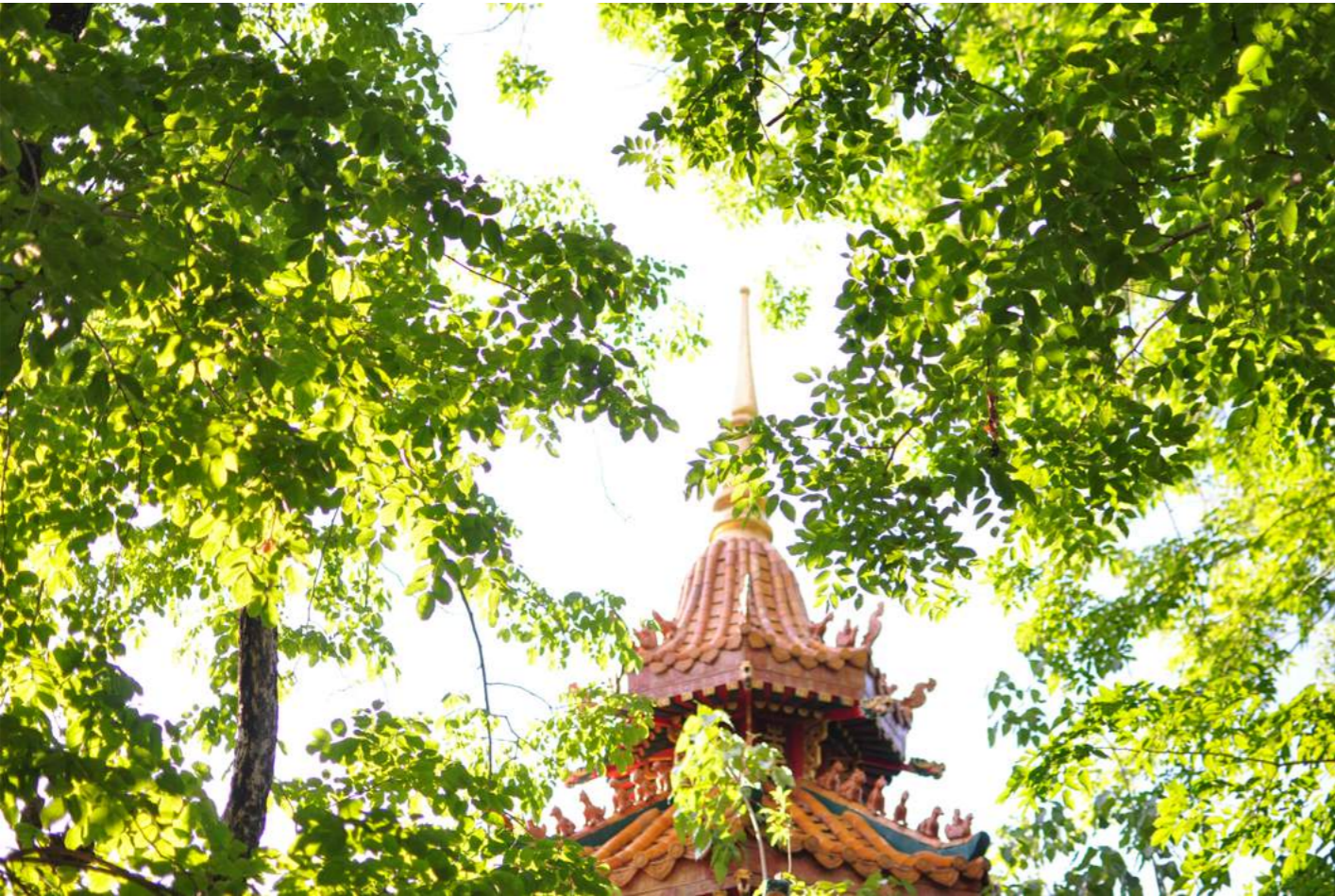
“It was such an eye-opening experience. Formalizing a female platform for networking is very important. Before I came here I wanted to learn, but now I want to help women. I learned a lot from this seminar.”



Ms. Tung Sau Ping

Entrepreneur of a vocational training center for the deaf. She is , also starting a bakery that will hire students from the training center.

THAILAND



Social enterprise gained recognition and momentum in Thailand in 2010. The Thai Social Enterprise Office (TSEO) was established in 2011, as the executive authority to deliver the Social Enterprises Master Plan (2010–14), under the Thai Health Promotion Foundation Act. The "Social Enterprise Promotion Act" was drafted and is awaiting the cabinet's approval due to delays associated with the change of government.

TSEO aims to stimulate cooperation among social enterprises and develop their networks in Thailand. In addition, TSEO works with potential entrepreneurs who have a particular interest in social and environmental issues to inspire social responsibility. Today, 400 entities are registered as social enterprises.

However, before 2010, social enterprises already existed. In looking at the past, Thailand has unique history in the Mekong region because it didn't experience colonization. Beginning in the late 1980's,

the Thai economy has been growing; the growth continued though the Asian currency crisis in 1997 and the ongoing coups. After 2006 coup, the long-existing problem of the economic and social gap between urban and rural areas was revealed. This motivated the young generation, especially those who benefited from the economic growth had the opportunity to study abroad, to work towards a solution. Some of them became social entrepreneurs. Simultaneously, as foreign aid decreased, most of the NGOs faced the reality that they need to fund themselves. This favored the prevalence of the social entrepreneurial mindset.

The Thai royal family is also one of the key players in the Thai social entrepreneurial sector. The late Princess Mother Princess Srinagarindra, for example, founded the Mae Fah Luang Foundation in 1964 and initiated the famous "The Doi Tung Development Project". This project began in 1988 as a holistic and integrated sustainable alternative livelihood development initiative.

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IN THAILAND

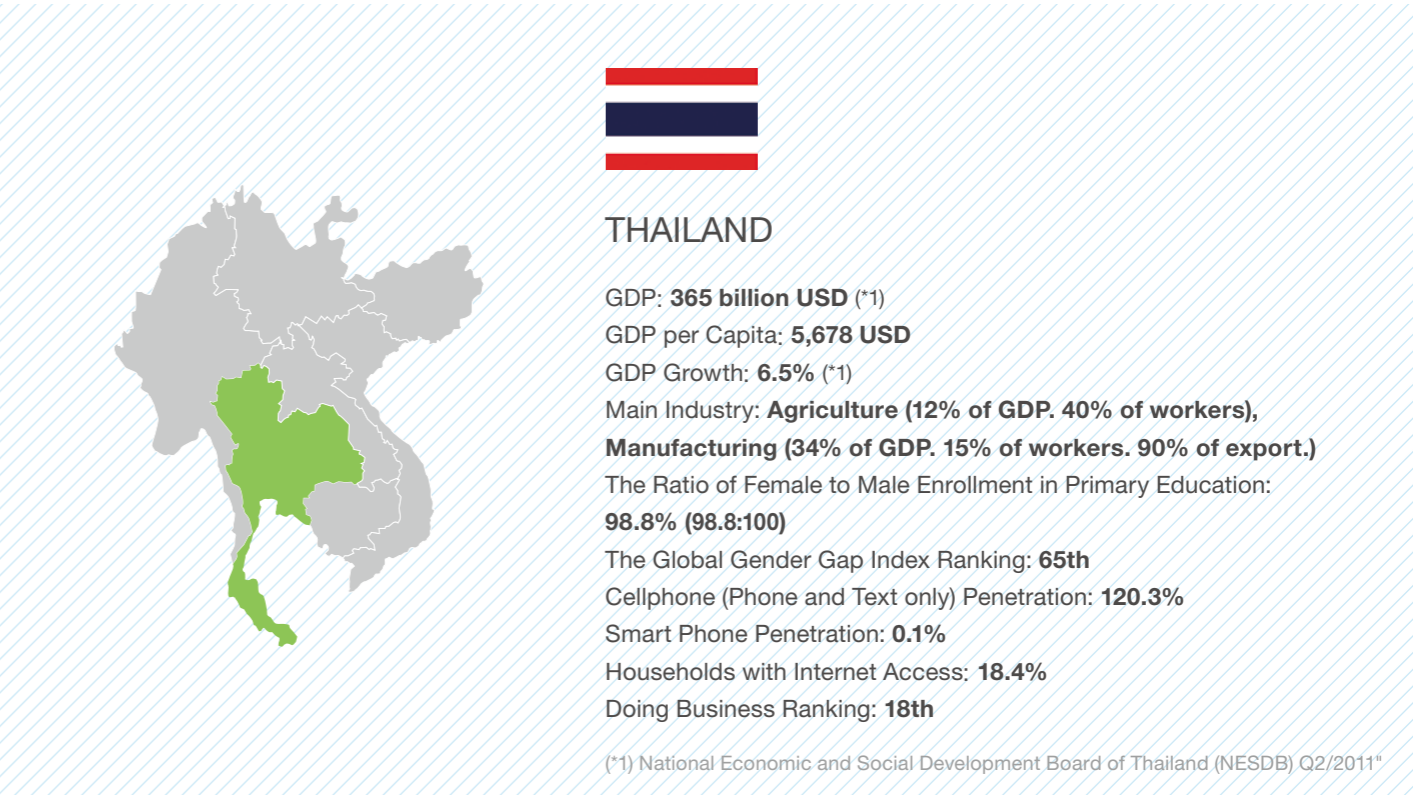
The following is the definition from the TSEO: A social enterprise is an enterprise with the main goal of solving a problem or developing the society and environment through a trade mechanism or provision of services. The enterprise functions by bringing in various new innovations to respond to the existing or anticipated challenges of the society and the environment while aiming to create impact and change sustainably.

A Social Enterprise must: have a clear identification of social and environmental objectives and goals from its inception,, have a sustainable financial structure, be socially and environmentally friendly, return profit to the society, and maintain transparency in operation.

WOMEN'S POSITION IN THAILAND

Thai women have an important economic role both in the micro household level as well as the national level. However, they are still under-represented and behind men in 'powerful' roles that allow for decision making. As time continues, especially in the Bangkok area, there is an increasing number of highly educated women who are choosing to marry later or not marry at all. Due to these societal trends Thailand is now facing a declining birthrate and aging society. The total fertility rates in Bangkok and nationwide are reported to be 0.8 and 1.39 respectively, which is even less than in Japan.

In the context of the new trend of social entrepreneurship, gender is not an issue as many women are now becoming entrepreneurs and there is no overt discrimination.



VIETNAM



The development of social enterprises in Vietnam can be divided into three main periods: prior to “Doi Moi” (1986), from 1986 to 2010, and from 2010 to the present. In December 1986, the government mandated the DoiMoi (open door) policy which allowed the centrally planned economy to shift to a market-oriented economy. This transition resulted in remarkable achievements. Notably, the economy grew at an average annual rate of more than 9% in 1995-1996 and 7.26% in 2000-2010. Vietnam became a middle income country.

Before “Doi Moi”, social enterprises were often associated with collective ownership and operated in the form of a cooperative serving the needs of vulnerable / disadvantaged communities. Between 1986 and 2010, social enterprises were closely connected with NGOs and were primarily funded by foreign organizations. After the country achieved lower-middle income status, donations to NGOs began to decrease, which encouraged many NGOs to look for alternative sources

of income. Some charity-based organizations, especially those established in the 1990s and 2000s, switched from NGOs to enterprise. Others began as enterprises with social motives.

2015 was a significant year for the social entrepreneurship movement in Vietnam. On July 1st 2015, Article 10, the Revised Law on Enterprise, which includes the definition, rights, and obligations of social enterprises, was enacted. This is the first law in Asia that defines social enterprises as a legal form. Although Korea enacted “Social Enterprise Promotion Act” in 2007, this more recent law gives social enterprises a stronger legal position. Socially-oriented organizations in Vietnam can now be registered as NGOs, co-operatives, companies or social enterprises.

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IN VIETNAM



The term “social enterprise” was imported to Vietnam around 2010 by two organizations: the Centre for Social Initiatives Promotion (supported by the British Council) and the SPARK Centre (initially supported by the Dutch NGO, SNV).

The concept of “social enterprise” is still relatively new, however, the definition of “social enterprise” in Vietnam was established in the previously mentioned 2015 Revised Law on Enterprise. To summarize, a social enterprise must be registered in accordance with the law and its operational objective must be to resolve social or environmental issues in the interests of the community. The enterprise should re-invest at least 51% of its total annual profit for the purpose of implementing social or environmental objectives as registered. Unlike other enterprises, social enterprises may receive charity funds or support from non-governmental organizations or other enterprises. However, because this is a new law, many operating social enterprises have not been legally registered as social enterprises.

WOMEN’S POSITION IN VIETNAM

Traditionally, men have had a superior role to women in Vietnamese society. Men have dominated in all spheres of life from family to education. While the Vietnamese society still remains gendered in many ways, gender roles are beginning to become more equitable. In the Vietnamese Constitutional Law of 1993, women and men were legislated to have equal positions.





VIETNAM

GDP: **170 billion USD** (*1)
GDP per Capita: **1,896 USD** (*1)
GDP Growth: **5.4%** (*2)
Main Industry: **Agriculture and Fishing, Mining, Light Manufacturing**
The Ratio of Female to Male Enrollment in Primary Education: **93.9% (93.9 : 100)**
The Global Gender Gap Index ranking: **73th**
Cellphone (Phone and Text only) Penetration: **149.4%**
Smart Phone Penetration: **19%**
Households with Internet Access: **18.4%**
Doing Business Ranking: **99th**

(*1) IMF 2013, (*2) General Statistics Office of Vietnam 2013

MYANMAR



There are three significant events which strongly influenced the development pathway of the social entrepreneur ecosystem in Myanmar. One event was the Nargis Cyclone in 2008. The transition to a more active civil society began in the 1990s but the cyclone served as an additional catalyst for change. The military government initially resisted some of the large-scale international aid offerings which galvanized Myanmar Nationals to work on behalf of the affected communities. These actions evolved into long-term activities.

The second significant event for the social entrepreneur ecosystem was the institutional change in politics and economics that occurred when the new government took office in 2011. This change resulted in declining government services and consequently civil society could expand and operate in underserved sectors.

In addition, many countries in the EU as well as the US have eased economic sanctions against Myanmar

since 2012. These reductions in economic sanctions led to increased trade, investment opportunities and expectations for consequent economic growth. The historical victory of the National League for Democracy led by Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi in November 2015 has increased expectations for further democracy. If the country becomes more democratic, there will be more economic opportunities for everyone. In keeping with that theory, Myanmar repatriates from Singapore, Thailand, Japan, the Americas, and Europe have returned home and have become the agents of the change in Myanmar. Although the concept of social entrepreneurship is relatively new in Myanmar and lacks consistency in the definition and understanding, there are many opportunities in the new Myanmar.

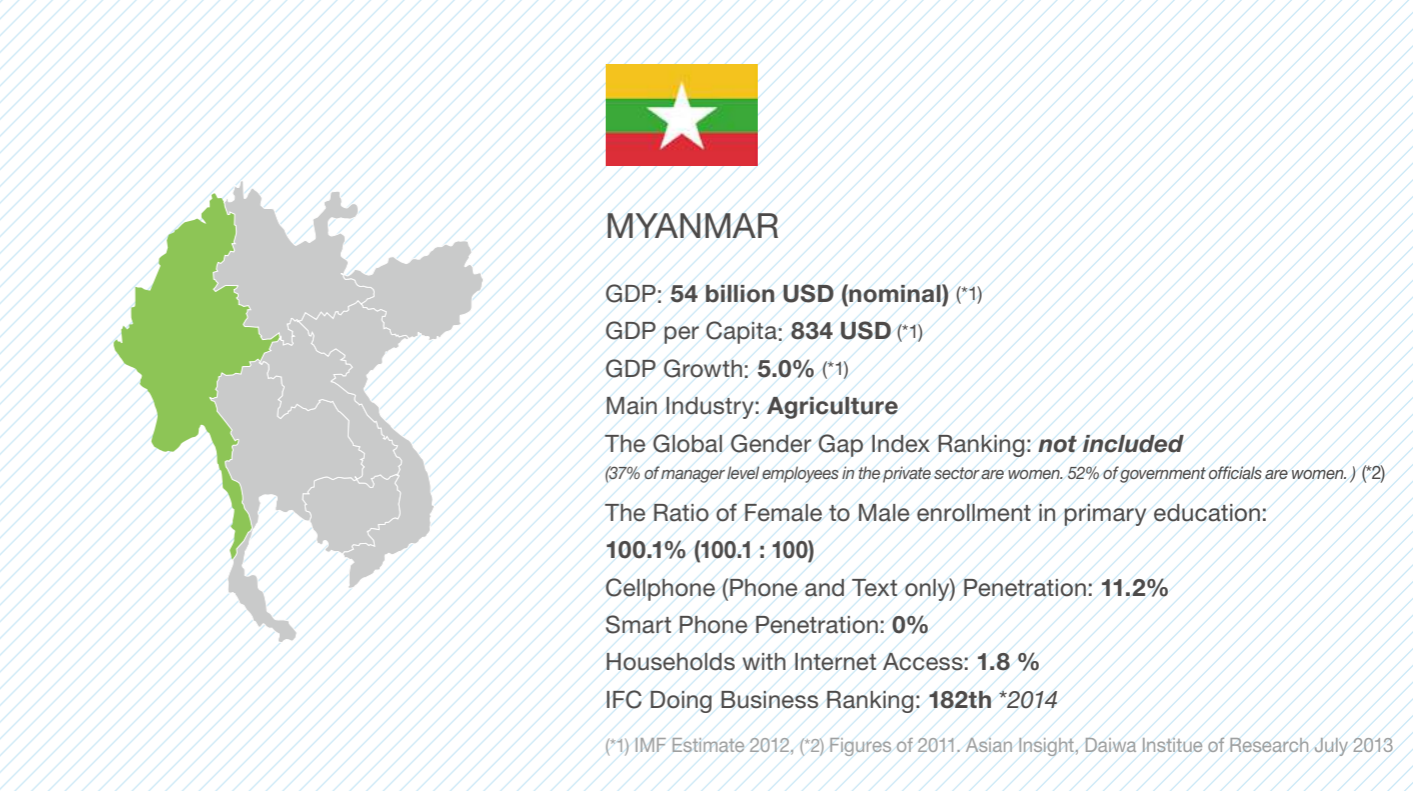
DEFINITION OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IN MYANMAR

There are no laws in Myanmar that define social enterprise. Social enterprises can be NGOs or associations that have revenue generation activities other than donations. Unlike neighboring Mekong countries, international NGOs were not very present in the social enterprise ecosystem of Myanmar until President U Thein Sein's political reform. The military regime didn't allow foreign NGOs to enter Myanmar for years. In addition, because the registration process for NGOs took a long time, local "NGO"s often chose to be legally classified as associations or SMEs, or even operate without registering. Since associations face some limitations in their engagement in commercial and for-profit activities, SMEs were the most common legal form of enterprise. NGOs are booming and most people confuse NGOs and social enterprises.

After the country become more open in 2012, additional incubators and accelerators were launched in Myanmar. UNICEF Myanmar, for example, even released a new initiative called The Social Innovation Lab in 2015 with Project Hub Yangon (incubator), Point B (design thinking) and Kanaung Hub (co-working space at Myanmar ICT Park) to bridge a central gap in the existing ecosystem of innovators in Myanmar. Surprisingly, the government collaborated with the private sector to operate Kanaung Hub.

WOMEN'S POSITION IN MYANMAR

Compared with some Asian countries, the gender gap is not as extreme; there are some gaps, especially in rural areas and decision-making positions. Given this situation, the government enacted the "National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women: NSPAW" in 2013. This law is expected to accelerate changes in the gender gap.



CAMBODIA



Cambodia experienced continuous civil war for approximately 20 years finally ending with the signing of the 1991 Paris Peace Accords. Follow this event, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) began taking action to rebuild the nation. At this time ODAs and international NGOs (INGOs) started to enter the country The INGOs created income-generating activities, thus introducing the concept of social enterprise (Friends’ International, Hagar International). Many NGOs followed suit when donor funding decreased. Subsequently, NGOs developed into hybrid forms, either holding both an NGO and an enterprise entity, or blending both features into one.

The Cambodian economy has gradually recovered since 1991 with some ups and downs along the way. In 2007, foreign direct investment inflows reached US\$600 million which slightly exceeded the amount given by ODAs. This economic growth encouraged the entrepreneurial mindset and social entrepreneurs have appeared in a

variety of areas ranging from tech to the environment. Several co-working spaces with business incubators have been launched as well.

Social entrepreneurs in Cambodia will potentially encounter several obstacles. One issue is that the documentation process and access to financial sources are limited because local governments and financial institutions are not caught up on the initiative. Another barrier is the relatively new and small Cambodian startups markets; less than 10% of the population of 15 million are willing to purchase products and services from startup companies. More than 50% of the Cambodian population is under 24 and another 35% is between 25 and 54.

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IN CAMBODIA



There are no laws to define social enterprise in Cambodia. Most social enterprises in Cambodia are operated by NGOs or registered as associations with Cambodia’s Interior Ministry. Some are registered as businesses with the Ministry of Commerce (MoC). Now that social enterprises are becoming widespread in Cambodia, their ambiguous legal status is prompting leaders of the enterprises to lead efforts to more concretely define them.. However, it is unclear whether the leaders of the organizations view their businesses as social enterprises. .

Social Enterprise Cambodia provides a platform for social enterprises and entrepreneurs operating in Cambodia to share experiences, resources, and ideas. They are conducting a survey about existing social enterprises within Cambodia since January 2015 and are making website to introduce these enterprises on a national and global scale.

WOMEN’S POSITION IN CAMBODIA

According to the traditional point of view for Khmer women, which still remains widespread, women cannot be as good as men. . Until recently, a 19th century Cambodian code of conduct for women called "Cbap Srei", or law for women, was taught. However, the views are changing as the younger generation starts to move away from these traditions and break the code. Women become more appreciated by the family unit and are achieving higher positions in society as they become increasingly economically independent. There are now organizations like SHE Investments that focus on business women in Cambodia and provide high quality business training.





CAMBODIA

GDP: **14.2 billion USD** (*1)
GDP per Capita: **971 USD** (*2)
GDP Growth: **7.3%** (*2)
Main Industry: **Agriculture 33.6%, Textile 9.9%, Construction 6.5%, Tourism 4.6%** (*2)
The Ratio of Female to Male enrollment in primary education: **95.2% (95.2:100)**
The Global Gender Gap Index ranking: **104th**
Cellphone (Phone and Text only) Penetration: **149.4%**
Smart Phone Penetration: **6.9%**
Households with Internet Access: **15.6%**
Doing Business Ranking: **137th**

(*1) IMF Estimate 2012, (*2) Ministry of Economy and Finance Cambodia 2012

LAOS



In Laos, most of the social enterprises owned by local women are SMEs, which is also the most popular form of women-owned business in the country. NGOs are called NPAs or "Non Profit Associations" and the Lao government approved a decree for this in 2009. However, since it takes a few years to register as an NPA, many socially-oriented groups choose to remain as development organizations or register as businesses.

Lao women social entrepreneurs start their businesses with their own funding due to the high bank interest rates. Many of them have been exposed to international standards through education, work experience, or marriage with foreigners. Such experiences have also helped them learn about the concept of social entrepreneurship.

The idea of social enterprise is still new in Laos. It has been gradually introduced by foreign-owned Lao-based NGOs and businesses Most of their activities are found in

the areas of handicraft, agriculture, and café businesses. Their social objectives have been limited to local employment, income generation from local products, or cultural preservation. In 2014, co-working spaces such as THO LAO opened and currently function as intermediate organizations that encourage various types of social enterprises, including tech startups. In the same year, Startup weekend and TIGERS@Mekong regional sessions, which were initiated by the Secretary's Office of Global Partnerships (US) to strengthen the innovation ecosystems of the Mekong region, were organized for the first time. Through such young entrepreneurs' efforts, Laos will surely participate in the Mekong's regional movement of social entrepreneurs.

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IN LAOS



Currently there are no laws that define social enterprise in Laos. Laos is still developing its business environment. In 2004, the law for SMEs (The Prime Minister's Decree No.42/PM) was declared, and the Small and Medium Enterprise Promotion Development Office was established by the Ministry of Commerce. The decree outlined 6 policy areas: 1. Creating an enabling regulatory and administrative environment, 2. Enhancing competitiveness, 3. Expanding domestic and international markets, 4. Improving access to finance, 5. Encouraging and creating favorable conditions for establishing business organizations, and 6. Enhancing entrepreneurial attitude and characteristics within the society. In addition, the SME Development Fund was set up in 2010.

WOMEN'S POSITION IN LAOS

47 percent of the total workforce of 2.4 million people is female and 76 percent of them are employed in Agriculture; the rest of them work in manufacturing or services. Since the idea of social entrepreneurship is still new to Lao women, it is not shown in the rate.

Although the government has set gender equality as an important national goal, there are still many challenges surrounding women especially in the minority groups. Minority groups, which account for half of the Lao population, have traditional gender roles in which women are expected to follow men. Thus, for example, Hmong women's literacy rate remains at 26.5%, which is relatively low compared to 47.9% for Lao women. Some social enterprises owned by minority women such as Sisterhood for Development are addressing this problem and even trying a hybrid social enterprise model. In this model they run handicraft businesses and create revenue to cover operational costs.





LAOS

GDP: **9.1 billion USD** (*1)
GDP per Capita: **1,349 USD** (*1)
GDP Growth: **8.2%** (*1)
Main Industry: **Service 37%, Agriculture 26%, Manufacture 31%** (*1)
The Global Gender Gap Index Ranking: **60th / 135 countries** *2013
The Ratio of Female to Male enrollment in primary education: **95% (95:100)** *2012
Cellphone (Smart Phone and Text only) Penetration: **101.9%**
Smartphone penetration: **0.8%**
Households with Internet Access: **5.1%**
IFC Doing Business Ranking: **159th** *2014

(*1) Laos Statistics Bureau 2012

PHILLIPINES

A number of NGOs gathered and founded the Philippine Social Enterprise Network (PhilSEN) in 1999 which has been designed for community to discuss about social entrepreneurship and that became the start of social enterprise movement in the Philippines. However, history of social sector in the Philippines is much longer than this. NGOs, for example, have started already since 19th century. While the country experienced more than 300 years of Spanish colonization, invasion from US and Japan, and Marcos’ dictatorship, civil movements for realization of democracy and empowerment such as peasant movement, labor movement, women's movement, Church related activities and so were popped up naturally.

Now social enterprise and most of them are concentrated in urban area, especially in Manila, Cebu and Davao. They include mainly cooperatives and associations, about 500 microfinance institutions, (MFIs), fair trade organizations, and new-generation enterprises. Poverty reduction and scalability is always the two key issues for the sector and surprisingly there are very few service-based social enterprises compared to product-based.

The poverty reduction through social entrepreneurship (PRESENT) Coalition, co-chaired by the Ateneo School of Government and the Foundation for a Sustainable Society, Inc (FSSI), is trying to make law and submitted “The PRESENT Bille lawety,. But it hasn’t enacted yet and so there is no decided definition of it either. The PRESENT Coalition promotes the SEPPS definition of social enterprise, which is a social enterprise with the poor as primary stakeholders though, because it will change who will enjoy the rule, the definition will remain as a key discussion.



INDONESIA

Indonesia is Southeast Asia's most populous country and its economy has big potential. Following the Asian crisis Indonesia in the early and mid-2000s embarked on a reform process aimed at revitalizing the Indonesian economy. Social Entrepreneurship has become a booming field during this time. Before that during the authoritarian government, the political pressure was too strong and it did not allow for the field to grow though Ashoka has been operating in Indonesia since 1983. Now, democratization has been practiced and almost all sectors engage in the development of the field.

The Indonesian government has not provided support to social entrepreneurship in Indonesia yet. There are support but only for cooperative and SMEs saying that they can get small loans for small businesses amongst the youth.

Though Indonesia consists of 13,000 islands and has more than 583 different language groups, it is surprising that Indonesia has developed its social entrepreneurship in same level between cities and rural areas, however it exists almost 50% in Java, compared to other Southeast Asian countries which have diversified ethnic groups. According to British Council Indonesia, 76% of SEs are in early stage and most of them are running at community level which are highly replicable to other community as well. Since there are no laws for SEs yet, the number of SEs are yet correct, it is considered that there are about 500SEs and thousands more are coming. (BCG Study 2015).

Regarding women issue, first woman president among Islamic world was elected in 2001 and women has becoming more active in the society.



PHILLIPINES

GDP: **285 billion UDS**
GDP per Capita: **2,865 USD**
GDP Growth: **6.1%**
Main Industry: **Agriculture, Service (including Business Process Outsourcing) (*1)**
The Global Gender Gap Index Ranking: **0.790**
The Ratio of Girl to Boy Enrollment to Primary Education: **1.00%**
Cellphone (Phone and Text only) Penetration: **111%**
Smart Phone Penetration: **N/A**
Household with Internet Access: **39.7 %**
Doing Business Ranking: **103th**



INDONESIA

GDP: **8,696 Million UDS**
GDP per Capita: **3,500 USD**
GDP Growth: **5.0%**
Main Industry: **Manufacture, Agriculture, Tourism**
The Global Gender Gap Index Ranking: **97th**
The Ratio of Girl to Boy Enrollment to Primary Education: **1.01%**
Cellphone (Phone and Text only) Penetration: **N/A**
Smart Phone Penetration: **N/A**
Household with Internet Access: **N/A**
Doing Business Ranking: **109th**

MALAYSIA

Malaysian start-up ecosystem at present has been led by MaGIC (Malaysian Global Innovation & Creative Centre) which purpose is to encourage entrepreneurial activities and build ecosystem among key players. MaGIC was first announced in October 2013 by Prime Minister Najib Razak during the 4th Global Entrepreneurship Summit held in Kuala Lumpur. It locates at where is a place for most of the technology-driven start-ups.

Now it is estimated that only 100 social enterprises exist in Malaysia. Since it's quite low numbers compared to other ASEAN countries, Prime Minister announced the National Social Enterprise Blueprint on May 13, 2015. Under the Blueprint, the government has allocated RM 20 million to the MaGIC to increase the number of social enterprises to 1,000 by 2018. There is no legal definition of a "social enterprise" yet in Malaysia and difference between social enterprises and social business which coined by Dr. Muhammad Yunus, founder of Grameen Bank are often discussed. Social business only repays investors their original investment, and reinvests 100% of its profits back into the business while social business social enterprises are able to pay their investors dividends from the profits they make according MaGIC definition.

Malaysia have different ethnic groups including Malay (67%), Chinese (25%), Indian (7%) and other. Since there are good government program and assist of traditional community, NGO movements has not been very active especially among Malay people, majority ethnic group. Malay women are very active and it is said that one out of 5 peoples are operating their own business.



MALAYSIA

GDP: 986700 million RM
GDP per Capita: 10,548 USD
GDP Growth: 4.7%
Main Industry: **Manufacture (electronics), Agriculture (natural rubber, palm oil, lumber), Mining (tin, oil, LNG)**
The Global Gender Gap Index Ranking: 107th
The Ratio of Girl to Boy Enrollment to Primary Education: N/A
Cellphone (Phone and Text only) Penetration: N/A
Smart Phone Penetration: N/A
Household with Internet Access: N/A
Doing Business Ranking: 159th

CASE STUDY

THAI / MYANMAR / PHILIPPINE / JAPAN

AWSEN is serving as a platform to connect entrepreneurs and designers in crafts business from different countries. Ms. Phyu Ei, Thien, founder of Sunflower Social Enterprise (Myanmar) and Ms. Passawee Patsy Tapasanan, founder of FolkCharm Crafts (Thailand), met at the first AWSEN conference held in 2014. Inspired by the quality of Phyu's silk and cotton products, Patsy approached Phyu and found out about the Trainee Program for Craft Works, which Phyu was planning to attend at Kanazawa College of Art in Japan. Phyu was taking the opportunity to deepen her understanding of the history and techniques of textile, so she could further improve her products. Patsy also decided to join the program. The two shared their experience at AWSEN 2015 conference where Mr. Bansan, co-founder of EDAYA (Philippines) was present. He will be joining program the Trainee Program for Craft Works, in spring of 2016. Stimulated by each other's work and genuinely sharing opportunities, AWSEN members will be reaching higher standard with their products and services.



MYANMAR / VIETNAM

Ms. Zun Ei Phyu is an owner of the business Natural Doctor Myanmar which makes organic cosmetic products. In addition to owning this business, she is a medical doctor. Since she has attended the AWSEN program twice, she was able to compare her experiences and lessons. She reflects on her first seminar: "I learned how to design. I improved the package of my products using what I learned. With the new design, my products have gained popularity - appearing in the media and receiving more orders." "The second time I learned how to brand." She says, reviewing her most recent seminar. "I am very excited to think how I can promote the products better." Ms. Zun will take advantage of an opportunity from the second seminar as she seeks a way of collaboration with Ms. Ngoc Hang Nguyen from Vietnam, who plans to open a beauty salon. Ms. Zun plans to visit Vietnam and make a recipe for the beauty products incorporating local ingredients, which will be used in the new salon.





ASIAN WOMEN

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS
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REPORT 2015

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