

December 21, 2017
ASEAN-Japan Centre

AJWELP empowers women entrepreneurs in the ASEAN Member States



Snapshot from AJWELP 2017

The ASEAN-Japan Centre (AJC) organized the 2nd ASEAN-Japan Women Entrepreneurs' Linkage Program (AJWELP), a program to empower start-up women entrepreneurs, in Jakarta, Indonesia on December 3-6, 2017. It was co-hosted by Ministry of Cooperatives and SME of Indonesia and Kamar Dagang dan Industri Indonesia (KADIN: Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry), in cooperation with ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (ACCMSME), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ABAC), and ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Network (AWEN).

Gender equality and women's empowerment are important issues in both the ASEAN Member States and Japan; and women are expected to play a key role in sustainable development of a society. Therefore, each country carries policies to support women's full participation in societies, and consequently, there are schemes to support women's entrepreneurship. To boost this effort, AJC initiated an exchange program for women entrepreneurs in FY2014, in which AJC invited successful women entrepreneurs recommended by each ASEAN Member State's government to Japan to exchange their views with their Japanese counterparts for future joint business development.

AJWELP is an AJC's renewed exchange program for women entrepreneurs launched in FY2016. It provides a package of support to start-up women entrepreneurs in the ASEAN Member States. The participating entrepreneurs are given an opportunity to learn to become right entrepreneurs, to improve presentation skills, and to create networking with companies, senior entrepreneurs and AJWELP peers through its program, consisting of workshops, a business presentation event and company visits.

The business presentation event was the main program of AJWELP. In the event, a woman entrepreneur representing respective ASEAN Member States made a presentation on their business plan and challenges in front of companies that could become supporters, mentors who are established women entrepreneurs from both the ASEAN Member States and Japan. The presenters received various kinds of assistance from supporting companies and mentors on their business plans and advice for possible solutions to their business challenges.

In the light of success of the inaugural AJWELP organized in Manila, the Philippines in November 2016, the 2nd AJWELP was organized responding to requests by the ASEAN Member States. It was participated in by 10 novice women entrepreneurs nominated by the governments of the respective ASEAN Member States and AWEN, and 10 more women entrepreneurs who joined the program independently. At the business presentation event, five successful women entrepreneurs including Ms. Pacita Juan, Chair of AWEN, served as mentors; meanwhile, 15 companies including PT Aeon Indonesia and Facebook participated in the event as supporting companies and offered their services and products to the presenters. As a result of the business presentation event, 10 presenters received 74 concrete linkage or support offers in total (as of December 14, 2017). "AJWELP is a well thought-out program and model that motivates entrepreneurs to take a next step in growing their businesses, establishing links and expanding their network," one of the participants said.

Through the AJWELP, AJC aims to expand women entrepreneurs' business, improve their skills and leadership so as to contribute to realization of a sustainable growth of a society and improving the status of women.

Report of the AJWELP 2017: <http://www.asean.or.jp/en/tourism-info/20171215/>



Workshop



Business Presentation

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The ASEAN-Japan Centre is an intergovernmental organization established by the ASEAN Member States and Japan in 1981. It has been promoting exports from ASEAN to Japan while revitalizing investment, tourism as well as people-to-people exchanges between the ASEAN Member States and Japan. URL : <http://www.asean.or.jp/en/>

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