

## **Maybank Foundation assists disabled through innovative R.I.S.E programme**

- *First bank in Malaysia to initiate Micro Financing programmes for eligible People With Disabilities(PWDs)*

The Maybank Foundation has assisted more than 280 people with disabilities reach their dreams of becoming successful entrepreneurs via their economic empowerment Corporate Responsibility programme called “Reach Independence & Sustainable Entrepreneurship” (R.I.S.E) in collaboration with People System Consultancy.

The programme which started in September 2014 is targeted to participants from underprivileged communities - mainly people with disabilities (PWDs) - to help them increase their income without the need for business start-up grants.

Speaking at the R.I.S.E certificate presentation ceremony in Kuala Lumpur, Tan Sri Megat Zaharuddin Megat Mohd Nor, Chairman of the Maybank Foundation Board of Trustees said “Maybank is cognisant of our duty to drive financial inclusion to all segments of our society and increase the vibrancy and productivity of the real economy. In doing so, we aim to transform people with no access or ability of enjoying banking and financial solutions, to enjoy financial facilitation to be able to lead better lives. Spurred on by this clear mission, Maybank via our vehicle for Corporate Responsibility (CR), the Maybank Foundation strives to deliver initiatives that will deliver sustainable impact to the community.”

“The program has seen very encouraging outcome and I am very happy to hear that the average income per participant amongst the top 40% of RISE participants, has gone up by 179%. But more importantly than just increasing incomes, this program has also transformed the lives of many people, by changing their outlook on life, and helping them contribute to their families and communities.” added Tan Sri Megat.

From the success of the programme, Maybank aims to take the R.I.S.E program to a larger scale and to gradually move into other markets, beginning with Indonesia and the Philippines.

The R.I.S.E programme is a CR initiative by Maybank Foundation aimed at expanding the business capabilities of the disabled through a structured mentoring programme. The programme helps educate and guide participants in learning new business strategies in order to increase their overall business profits.

The R.I.S.E programme involves a 3-day Entrepreneurship & Financial Training followed by a 3-6 month mentoring period. Participants were selected from over 30 reputable homes based on ability as well as interest in the business world.

Participants, aged 18-60, are trained in strategic business and selling skills which include innovation, process and operational improvement, and sales strategies. Through the guidance of trainers and mentors, they have successfully achieved strong increase in income using their own capabilities and resources, without loans.

The participants were also educated on topics such as Practical Entrepreneurship Training, Effective Mentoring & Focus on Income Improvement and on the practise of 'No Business Start-up Grants'.

The programme had successfully expanded the business income of participants in the areas of Food-based business, Tailoring, Information Technology, Arts & Handicraft, Trading, and Minimarkets businesses.

To enhance the opportunities for participants, Maybank has also ventured into creating Micro Financing campaigns catered specially to selected PWDs that had enrolled in the R.I.S.E programme, allowing them the option to expand their businesses further. Through the RISE programme, a total of 28 participants from its Phase 1 batch were eligible to venture into Micro Financing via Maybank.

Maybank is currently the only Malaysian bank that has ventured into Micro Financing with People With Disabilities.

Under the scheme, participants are eligible to receive a minimum loan of RM1,000 and a maximum of RM10,000, and use it to grow their businesses and reach their goals in obtaining their maximum income level.

Among the requirements for Micro Financing for PWDs are:

- Participants must be a Malaysian
- Aged between 21 to 65
- Display talent in Entrepreneurship
- Be Self-employed / micro entrepreneurs that live within 5km (suburban / urban) and 20km (rural - preferred) radius from any Maybank branches
- Subject to clean bankruptcy search and no adverse financial records

Maybank Foundation has consistently engaged with communities region wide, especially those in developing markets, as part of its commitment to support them to thrive sustainably. Maybank Foundation is grounded on five focus areas which are healthy living, education, community empowerment, environmental diversity, arts and culture. In all five areas and in every country it operates in, Maybank is focused on activities and fundings that would create meaningful, measurable and sustainable impacts that differentiate it from its competitors and complement its mission to humanise financial services.