

## **Maybank builds new silk weaving training centre in Cambodia**

Maybank will be expanding its Maybank Women Eco-Weavers programme in Cambodia with the addition of a brand new silk weaving training centre in the province of Siem Reap. The training centre, located in Banteay Srey district, is part of Maybank's regional initiative which provides business opportunities and empowers underprivileged women weavers and mulberry farmers to become financially independent.

The ground breaking ceremony was officiated by the Chairman of Maybank Group, Datuk Mohaiyani Shamsudin and Chairman of Maybank Cambodia, Mr. Anthony Brent Elam, accompanied by Mr. Khim Finan, Banteay Srei District Governor of Siem Reap Province, Ms. Hinh Hach, Director of Department of Women's Affairs of Siem Reap Province and Mr. Sok Samnang, Chief of Banking Operation Division. Also present at the event were Dato' Mohd Hanif Suadi, CEO of Maybank Cambodia, Mr. Shahril Azuar Jimin, CEO of Maybank Foundation and Ms. Ngorn Vanntha, the founder of Color Silk Cambodia.

Datuk Mohaiyani Shamsudin said that the new silk weaving training centre signifies another milestone for the Maybank Women Eco-Weavers Programme in Cambodia which represents a collective effort to empower Cambodian women to achieve economic independence and benefit from financial inclusion as well as to preserve the country's weaving heritage.

"We are proud to establish this second silk weaving training centre in Siem Reap after the successful establishment of our first centre in Takeo province in 2016. Now operating in its fourth year, the Takeo centre has seen a total of 151 weavers who have graduated from the training programme and are now earning more than USD200 per month. Currently, there are another 27 trainees undergoing training, while 360 farming households have been engaged in mulberry tree planting to support the production of raw silk for the Takeo centre," said Datuk Mohaiyani.

"At the regional level, the Maybank Women Eco-Weavers programme continues to change lives in Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia and Malaysia. The programme is customised to meet specific objectives and requirements in each of the countries, covering areas such as training of new weavers, supporting the development of mulberry farms and providing microfinance assistance for the community. To date, the programme has positively impacted over 2,500 individuals across the value chain, staying true to our mission of humanising financial services in ASEAN."

Meanwhile, Shahril said that the new Maybank Silk Weaving Training Centre in Siem Reap is expected to be completed in the third quarter of 2020.

“The Centre will be a platform for participants to be skilled with vocational training and exposed to entrepreneurship opportunities. It will especially benefit economically disadvantaged young women who could otherwise be tempted to seek employment either in the city or abroad, in potentially harsh labour conditions. The course rolls out 25 trainees at a time, over a five-month training period facilitated by specialist artisans. Upon graduation, our new community of women weavers will bring the weaving looms provided back to their homes and commence production.”

The Maybank Women Eco-Weavers is one of Maybank Foundation’s flagship programmes designed to promote commonalities in ASEAN countries by enriching and promoting traditional woven textiles in a sustainable manner for various communities as well as helping underprivileged women becoming economically independent whilst advocating financial inclusion. It is targeted at women weavers from the poor and marginalised community.

The programme is endorsed and supported by the ASEAN Secretariat as it is an evolving common mission to preserve the region’s cultural heritage, create economic empowerment primarily for women, and contribute towards building the ASEAN identity. It is currently being implemented in four countries, namely Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos and Malaysia.

Maybank Foundation is the corporate responsibility arm of the Maybank Group, which seeks to positively impact communities in markets that Maybank operates. The Foundation’s programs are focused on six key pillars which are Education, Community Empowerment, Healthy Living, Arts & Culture and Environmental Diversity.

\*\*\*\*\*