

Maybank's R.I.S.E. uplifts lives of over 19,000 PWDs across ASEAN

- *Empowerment programme champions financial independence among PWDs and the marginalised*

Maybank's economic empowerment programme R.I.S.E. (Reach Independence and Sustainable Entrepreneurship), which is designed to support disadvantaged communities particularly Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in ASEAN, has positively impacted the lives of 19,481 participants across Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Laos.

To commemorate the successful implementation of this flagship programme by Maybank Foundation, a documentary was released to celebrate the success of the R.I.S.E participants whose lives have been transformed and to show the positive impact the programme has had on their families and communities they belong to.

A premiere of the R.I.S.E documentary, entitled "A Time to R.I.S.E" was held on 30 September at the Fairmont Hotel, Jakarta and was graced by Lee Yoong Yoong, Director for Community Affairs Directorate, ASEAN Secretariat; Endang Kurnia Saputra, Deputy Director of the Representative Office of Bank Indonesia DKI Jakarta; Dr. Salahuddin Yahya, Secretary of Directorate General of Social Rehabilitation, Ministry of Social Affairs; and Premi Lasari, Head of Social Department of Jakarta Province.

Also present were Maybank and Maybank Foundation Chairman Tan Sri Dato' Sri Zamzamzairani Mohd Isa, Maybank Group President & Chief Executive Officer Dato' Khairussaleh Ramli and Maybank Chief Sustainability Officer Shahril Azuar Jimin.

Tan Sri Dato' Sri Zamzamzairani said that as a leading financial institution in the region, Maybank is in a key position to uplift PWDs so that they are able to remain independent and continuously contribute towards economic growth. The R.I.S.E. programme seeks to provide real and tangible support for disadvantaged communities as part of Maybank's commitment to drive financial inclusion across ASEAN and meet one of the Group's sustainability goals of improving the lives of 1 million households across ASEAN by 2025.

"Our Sustainability agenda under the M25 plan is anchored on our mission of Humanising Financial Services. In driving this, we will continue to implement initiatives for the betterment of the people and society in the region especially via high impact programmes such as R.I.S.E. This will be our longstanding commitment to further equip communities with lifelong financial skills and knowledge, addressing current and situational needs, and building financial resilience."

The top 40% of the participants trained have achieved an average monthly income increase of 379.52%, while 70% of all participants were able to become self-sufficient and continue

to thrive in running their businesses years after the initial training. This was also achieved without any loans or financial aid.

A programme beneficiary, **Zulkiflee Hussein from Malaysia** said the R.I.S.E. programme has benefited him, his family and the PWD community in his area. He was able to expand his business and recruit part-time workers so they could earn more income. Zulkiflee is now able to provide a more comfortable life for his family. Apart from that, Zulkiflee said he has been given the opportunity to inspire and motivate newly disabled people in the hospital to encourage them to embrace their ‘disabilities’ and push themselves towards a better life.

Meanwhile, **Veronica Calalang of the Philippines** said “The R.I.S.E. programme helped boost my morale and made me realise I could do more. It equipped me with the proper knowledge of how to start a business and how to overcome the struggles I may face, both in life and in business.”

Similarly, **Soukitta Sisoulath from Laos** said “The R.I.S.E programme has turned me, a single mother into a confident businesswoman with a strong passion for transforming the lives of other PWDs by creating job opportunities for them.”

Finally, **Sofyan Sukmana from Indonesia** shared, “My business took a hard hit during the pandemic. It was a very tough time but fortunately, I was given the tools and knowledge to grow and rise again through the R.I.S.E. programme. I am proud that I can provide these students with a chance to learn a skill and improve their livelihoods all thanks to the R.I.S.E. programme and I will continue to work hard towards my mission to provide better, accessible, and inclusive education and technology for all.”

The R.I.S.E programme consists of four major components starting off with a three-day workshop on entrepreneurial and financial training. Participants will be exposed to various disciplines on implementation and application of business strategies as well as techniques on budgeting, cash flow management and resource planning. After the workshop, participants will be mentored for a period of between three to six months. During this phase, they will receive guidance on starting up their business, troubleshooting business processes and learn ways to drive sales and income growth. This will be followed by reporting and tracking of their performance to ensure that the programme participants are able to record sustainable income increases. The beneficiaries will then have the opportunity to register for micro-financing facilities with Maybank to further expand their businesses.

R.I.S.E is one of Maybank Foundation’s flagship programmes carried out in partnership with social enterprise People Systems Consultancy (PSC). It is in line with the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint 2025 in ASEAN and the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Maybank Foundation, which was established in 2010, actively supports community programmes under six key pillars namely Arts & Culture, Education, Community Empowerment, Environmental Diversity, Healthy Living and Disaster Relief.
