

**Stories of Women's Economic Empowerment
in the Bio-Circular Green Economy
Best Practices**

Stories of Women's Economic Empowerment
in the Bio-Circular-Green Economy

Published by Center for Philanthropy and Civil Society, National Institute of Development Administration and Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security

Center for Philanthropy and Civil Society
National Institute of Development
Administration

1st edition. – Bangkok : Center for Philanthropy and Civil Society, National Institute of Development Administration, 2022.

September 2022

Printed at Sukhumvitprinting Co.,Ltd.

ISBN : 978-616-482-104-0

Foreword

In APEC 2022, Thailand hosted a series of meetings to discuss issues and progress on APEC's women and the economy agenda. These meetings included two meetings of the Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy, a Public-Private Dialogue on Women and the Economy, and the High-Level Policy Dialogue on Women and the Economy Forum. The meetings were held under the theme of "Women's Empowerment through the Bio-Circular-Green Economy." The integration of BCG economic model is envisioned to advance sustainable and inclusive growth including addressing the imbalances of economic participation of women and girls in our economies. It is critical that the knowledge that contributes to women's economic empowerment be harnessed and shared, particularly the knowledge of the linkages of BCG and women's economic empowerment.

In this connection, the Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security in collaboration with the Center for Philanthropy and Civil Society of the National Institute of Development Administration launched a project to research and to present the experiences and lessons from women entrepreneurs that have engaged BCG economic model in their business operation, ranging from start-ups to large businesses, in Thailand and selected APEC economies.

This publication brings together the best practices on how women's economic empowerment and BCG interacts, specifically how BCG is primed for women's economic empowerment and how it contributes to the sustainability outcomes of BCG. The women entrepreneurs highlighted in the case studies demonstrate how they surpass the traditional gender norms that discriminate women from fully engaging in the economy. Their stories affirm that women are the natural leaders in the BCG economic model and philosophy.

We thank the women entrepreneurs in this study who have paved the ways for many that are on this challenging journey. To bring gender equality to reality, there remain many challenges at all levels including policies, cultures, and societal norms. However, many positive changes have also materialized as these issues are addressed in the international forums such as the APEC Women and Economy Forum. It is our hope that this publication contributes to such efforts and progress of APEC economies to advance gender equality.

Acknowledgement

This study was made possible with the assistance, directly and indirectly, of many persons. I will never be able to express adequate appreciation to Dr. Juree Vichit-Vadakan who helped me with advice and guidance as well as continuous support in more ways than I can innumerate. To my dear friend and colleague Dr. Sutthana Vichitrananda, I would like to thank her for helping to make this volume a reality. My appreciation also goes to other wonderful colleagues who have written some of the cases. Special thanks to Asmita Khadka and Angkana Asawasakulkrai. You are very special, and I would like to accord you credits for your commitment, dedication, talent, and hard work. I would also like to thank Dr. Ketkanda Jaturongkachoke who served as the editor and Dr. Chirawan Bhakdibutr for her kind assistance in this project. Other staff members at the Center for Philanthropy and Civil Society of the National Institute of Development Administration have all pitched in to help in numerous ways. I would also like to thank Nguyen Lan Phuong for the Viet-Nam case.

My profound gratitude goes to the very special women who are the true heroines as well as key informants of this study. Thank you for allowing us to tell your stories. We realize that we cannot capture every facet of your remarkable life and achievement. We also ask you for your understanding and forbearance for our interpretation and analysis should they deviate from your views.

To all who have helped contribute valuable comments and insights to our work, especially through the focus group discussions, I would like to thank you.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the Department of Women Affairs and Family Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security for funding this project.

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