

DevelopHer: Empowering Women in Asia

A mobile learning application paired with online mentoring helps women entrepreneurs become successful business owners

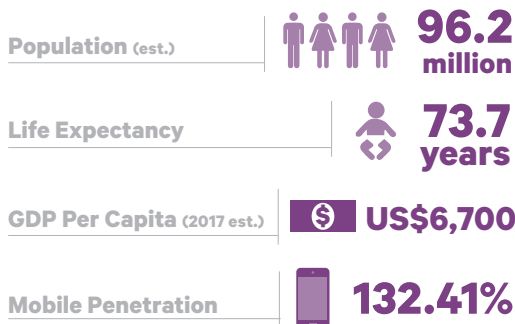
Entrepreneurship is growing rapidly across Southeast Asia. In Vietnam, women are one-third more likely than men to start a business.¹ Yet, while these women are often drawn to entrepreneurship out of necessity, they also face challenges accessing the resources and support they need to develop, grow and sustain their businesses. With help from the DevelopHer project, implemented in collaboration with the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women (the Foundation), women entrepreneurs across Vietnam can benefit from mobile learning tools and online mentoring support to overcome business challenges and take their enterprises to the next level.

Challenge

- Women's limited participation in the labor force perpetuates gender inequality, poverty and unequal economic growth. According to a recent report, Asian economies could add \$4.5 trillion to their GDP by 2025 by boosting women's economic participation.²
- Women entrepreneurs face common challenges when starting and growing businesses. These include lack of access to training, personalized support and business and support networks; lack of confidence; lack of innovative products, services and/or approaches; and difficulty managing family and business demands.
- In Vietnam, women entrepreneurs cite their top challenges as lack of market information and lack of access to resources, credit, business trainings and digital distribution channels. A 2017 University of Bedfordshire study found that women entrepreneurs in Vietnam felt that a mobile application addressing these challenges would improve their businesses.

VIETNAM

2018 Statistics*



Solution

- DevelopHer aims to unlock the potential of women entrepreneurs by combining the breadth of a mobile learning app with the depth of personalized, online mentoring. This approach empowers women to access critical information needed to build their skills and confidence and run their businesses more effectively. It also supports high-potential women entrepreneurs who are able to employ and mentor others and serve as leaders in their communities.
- DevelopHer enables the Foundation to offer its high-impact Mentoring Women in Business Programme across Southeast Asia. This cross-border, online program connects women entrepreneurs with dedicated mentors who provide one-to-one support over the course of a year. A bespoke online and mobile-enabled platform enables access to trainings and resources on mentoring, business, leadership, and financial literacy topics, and a learning and networking community of more than 6,000 participants in 100 countries.
- The program includes a mobile app, HerVenture, in Vietnam, which provides women entrepreneurs with access to tools, support and networks to start and grow their own businesses.
 - The app provides an inexpensive way for women who own micro and small businesses to receive essential business training, tips and support.
 - The app features information on how to launch a business, product customization and innovation, expanding market access, expanding business operations and workforce, and access to finance.
 - HerVenture is designed to meet the specific needs of users by suggesting a unique sequence of learning content tailored to each entrepreneur.
 - The app features a user-friendly interface, reminds and incentivizes users to progress through the learning, and features static content which users can interact with offline.
 - The content is delivered in bite-sized, easily digestible and engaging formats.

Impact



3,000 Women Entrepreneurs

In its first year, at least 3,000 women entrepreneurs in Vietnam are expected to download the HerVenture app to their mobile devices and benefit from its business content. Over 180 high-potential women entrepreneurs in Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries are offered in-depth, one-to-one support through the Mentoring Women in Business Programme. Women entrepreneurs who graduate from the mentoring component are encouraged to mentor others, expanding the program's reach and impact.



Economic Sustainability

DevelopHer aligns with Vietnam's strategy to increase the nation's economic sustainability. This strategy includes a focus on women entrepreneurs and aims to have 35 percent or more women entrepreneurs by 2020.



Gender Equality and Decent Work for All

DevelopHer works toward achieving gender equality as well as economic growth and decent work for all, which are Goals 5 and 8, respectively, of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

Program Stakeholders



¹ <http://gemconsortium.org/report/4986Q>

² <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality/the-power-of-parity-advancing-womens-equality-in-asia-pacific>

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