

Newspaper clipping

Date	31 October 2019
Publication	FOCUS Malaysia
Page / Section	Online / Snippets
Compiled by	Farhah Aziz
Headline	Connecting Women Entrepreneurs to Opportunities
Event	APEC and Women's Economic Empowerment




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Connecting Women Entrepreneurs to Opportunities

Focus Malaysia 31 Oct 2019 13:16



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The Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI) in collaboration with the Embassy of the United States of America in Kuala Lumpur organised the APEC and Women's Economic Empowerment Dialogue at the Sunway University. The event was themed "Connecting Women Entrepreneurs to Domestic and International Market Opportunities" presented by Ms Greta Schettler, Founder and CEO of Equal Up Strategies, courtesy of the Embassy of the United States of America in Kuala Lumpur.

The session provided in-depth and specific best practices that enables micro and cottage industry businesses and SMEs run by women to connect to larger domestic and international market opportunities.

In the keynote address delivered by Ms Schettler, specific case studies were presented on the strategies that multinational corporations deploy to create business opportunities and how they thrive in their specific industries such as oil and gas, tourism, retail, accounting and technology.

Meanwhile, in the dialogue session that followed, Ms Schettler also shared specific guidance for women entrepreneurs on how best to elevate their business offerings and techniques to seize business opportunities in the domestic and global market respectively. Additionally, the sharing also touched on the pivotal roles that government and NGOs play in enhancing the landscape for women entrepreneurs in the ecosystem. The dialogue session was moderated by Dr Praba Koran, Senior Director, International Trade & Business Advisory Centre (ITBAC).

Ms Melissa Ong, ASLI CEO said, "ASLI is grateful to receive Ms Greta Schettler who flew all the way from the US to share best practices with our women entrepreneurs in how to effectively expand their market reach locally and internationally. This event reflects ASLI's full effort at enhancing women's economic empowerment, in line with the 5th thrust of the UN Sustainable Development Goals on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment."

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is increasing its focus on the role of women in the economy. The good news is that there is improved participation of women in the upper echelons of policy and decision making. Connecting women to wider business opportunities enabled the women to further their advances in economic participation and bring benefit to their families and communities. Malaysia will be playing host for APEC activities in 2020 and aims to create greater prosperity for the people in this region by prioritising balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative and secure growth as well as by accelerating economic integration.