

# ASEAN Women in the Digital Economy



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Creating an Inclusive Digital Entrepreneurial Ecosystem – Perspectives from South-East Asia

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ERIA

Representative  
ceremony  
Various Areas



ASEAN+3



ASEAN+6



Assembly (AIPA) met this morning for the signing  
Economic Community and ASEAN Economic Integration in  
of Hidetoshi Nishimura, the President of ERIA. The  
to ASEAN

# What is the digital economy?

*“The Digital Economy incorporates all economic activity reliant on, or significantly enhanced by the use of digital inputs, including digital technologies, digital infrastructure, digital services and data. It refers to all producers and consumers, including government, that are utilising these digital inputs in their economic activities.”*

Definition proposed by the OECD to the G20 Digital Economy Task Force (with inputs from several international organizations including UNCTAD)

# Towards digital economies *a spectacular acceleration across ASEAN...*

- The ASEAN region is one of the **fastest growing digital economies** in the world
- The number of **digital consumers** nearly tripled between 2015 and 2018 **from 90 million in 2015 to 250 million in 2018 to 310 million by the end of 2020**. The **pandemic is dramatically accelerating this trend** and according to some recent estimates (Facebook and Bain & Company 2020, McKinsey 2020)
- Country examples: **Indonesia's e-commerce market is booming** at the rate of over 30% per year. **Singapore, Thailand, and Malaysia are also projected to experience double-digit growth** (ERIA 2017)



- ASEAN economies are **global leader in terms of e-wallets and digital payment adoption**. At least 10% of the adult populations of Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, and Singapore already use e-wallets, well ahead of those of advanced economies (BCG 2020)

# ... but the digital transformation must be inclusive!



- In the region people with best connectivity and digital skills tend to be men in metropolitan areas. **Women, especially in rural communities are disadvantaged** (Asia Foundation 2019)
- Many women entrepreneurs across ASEAN but they tend to own and manage MSMEs (GEM 2018), which tend to have a **weaker digital presence and make usage of more basic digital tools if any** (ERIA 2019)

- Women are more likely to **lack digital skills** and are generally **underrepresented in STEM disciplines**. In Thailand, 1 in 4 men studied STEM degrees, compared to only 1 in 7 women (ILO 2017). In Indonesia, 34 % of women (versus 22% of men) do not use a mobile phone because they do not know how to use one (GSMA 2018)

# Summing up



- Great opportunities exist but **women need to have access to these opportunities** of the digital economy
- Women need to access **better digital skills** – this is key for ASEAN
- There is still an important **lack of data** on the participation of women in the digital economy in ASEAN, there is certainly room for better statistics and analytics
- Women entrepreneurs are **a key building block of the post pandemic economic recovery**
- This is not only a social imperative but also an **economic opportunity** concerning all of us

# If interested to read more...

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Thank you!  
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