



TPSA | CANADA-INDONESIA TRADE AND
PRIVATE SECTOR ASSISTANCE PROJECT



SUCCESS STORY

Helping Indonesian Women Entrepreneurs Export Through Digital Marketing

Indonesian entrepreneur Hapsari Maharani owns FiDa Art, a small business selling handmade jewelry made from copper wire, natural stones, and gems. She used to sell and market her products solely through her website; it didn't occur to her to use Instagram or Facebook as her primary marketing tools. "On my old Instagram, I posted many photos of our team, proof of transactions, and photos of VIPs. There was hardly any display of my jewelry products. While I was selling them, I did not expose them to my potential buyers," says Hapsari.



Hapsari Maharani, owner of FiDa Art.

But a training workshop designed and delivered by the TPSA gender team and staff from the Indonesian Export Training Center (IETC) helped Hapsari and a group of other Indonesian women entrepreneurs learn about digital marketing techniques and best practices, as well as gender equality issues and how they affect women's business success. The training was very helpful to Hapsari and many of the other participants, who put their learnings into practice right away and are already seeing results.

"Instagram is now my preferred social media platform for marketing my products. People go on our Instagram page and order directly from there. It is so effective and efficient," she says.

THE CHALLENGE: A LACK OF DIGITAL MARKETING KNOW-HOW

Many Indonesian women entrepreneurs take care of their homes and families while also trying to run their business, and must balance their time between these roles, often working from home to make this possible. Also, many Indonesian women must seek permission from their husbands to meet with

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Program undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada provided through Global Affairs Canada

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business partners or pursue training outside the home. Because digital marketing can be done from the home in their limited spare time, it is well-suited to their needs, but it can be hard to learn the proper techniques on one's own.

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So IETC sought out assistance from the TPSA project to train women-led SMEs on digital marketing. Although many women entrepreneurs in Indonesia had already dipped their toes into the world of online marketing, they wanted to hear from experts and from other successful women entrepreneurs about the techniques and practices that would be most helpful.

THE STRATEGY: ADVICE AND SUPPORT FROM EXPERTS AND PEERS

Twenty women-led SMEs from the apparel and fashion industries participated in the March 2018 training workshop, which the TPSA gender team and IETC training staff worked together to design and deliver.

The workshop opened with a gender awareness session that employed exercises and reflection to help participants understand the ways that gender inequality has affected and influenced their own situation as wives, mothers, home managers, entrepreneurs, and business owners. They also learned how owning a business can empower women economically. This led to increased self-awareness on the part of the women entrepreneurs, many of whom have made choices and adjusted their business approaches to fit into the gender roles imposed by Indonesian cultural norms. For example, many of them work from home to enable them to also care for their children and keep house. Some have only been able to grow their businesses once their children were older and more independent. Others have chosen not to pursue certain opportunities because they would involve too much travel or working with men instead of with other women.

During the workshop, experts in digital marketing discussed the technological aspects of digital marketing and e-commerce, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of various social media platforms and how to get the most from them. Several women-led SMEs from the apparel and footwear industries who had received assistance from TPSA were also invited to share their real-life experiences with digital marketing, and offered participants many practical tips to apply to their businesses.



Dati Fatimah, TPSA gender equality consultant, opens the digital marketing workshop.



THE IMPACT: EFFECTIVE DIGITAL MARKETING LEADS TO GROWTH AND SUCCESS

After participating in the workshop, Hapsari created a business-focused Instagram account for FiDa Art, following advice from the training to focus on the jewelry itself and use brighter, more appealing photos. Visits to her Instagram by both Indonesian and foreign clients increased; she has now exported jewelry to Hong Kong and recently received an order for 2,000 pieces per month for a contract period of two years.

Hapsari also now offers a training course on jewelry-making. She has conducted training in five cities on Java and plans to do more. She encourages graduates to open their own businesses and act as her suppliers, assisting them with networking and marketing while ensuring that they meet her design and quality standards. One of her graduates and new suppliers is Arlik Sundari, who has her own blog and Instagram page and makes jewelry from recycled materials such as wire salvaged from air-conditioning units.



Yun Yun Indarti of Indy Faza.

Yun Yun Indarti (known as Indy), who runs a Muslim clothing business called Indy Faza, also expanded her use of Instagram after the training workshop, as well as starting a Facebook fan page to market her products. These efforts have led to increased sales, new clients, and the successful creation of designs intended to appeal to the international market. She has been invited to several fashion fairs and festivals, including Beirut Fashion Week, on the strength of her digital marketing efforts.

Een Soedijono sells leather and batik bags, purses, wallets, and accessories. She markets her products using websites and by advertising on Facebook and Instagram. She exports to Australia, Malaysia, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. While she already had extensive experience with online marketing, the training workshop taught her to optimize the opportunities offered by digital technologies. On her websites, for example, she now provides history about her designs as well as use and care information for her products, rather than just photos. This triggered more customer interest in her products.

Several other training participants, including Irma Suryani, Sarah Widjanarko, Trini Anggriani, and Nurhayati, experienced an increase in sales of their products simply by improving their social media content and adding new photos and information frequently.



Een Soedijono (on the right) with samples of her purses.



THE FUTURE: IMAGINING AND ACHIEVING MORE SUCCESS

The participants in the digital marketing training workshop have many dreams and ambitions for their businesses. Indy continues to improve her website, because she wants to sell her products more widely in Indonesia and abroad. Sarah and her brother set up a new online business producing and selling snacks such as cassava and banana chips; it has been successful and boasts buyers from all over the world.

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—Hapsari Maharani, FiDa Art

Hapsari will continue to expand her jewelry-making courses. Ima is exploring the possibility of opening a naturally-dyed batik business. Trini wants to start a zero-waste program by producing fashion accessories from batik-fabric offcuts. All of them will continue to harness the power of digital marketing to support their business efforts.