



SPEECH TEXT

**YB DATO' SRI HAJAH NANCY BINTI HAJI SHUKRI
MINISTER OF WOMEN, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

STRIVERS HUB LAUNCH

The Asia Foundation & Mastercard Centre for Inclusive Growth

12 AUGUST 2024 (MONDAY) | 12.30pm – 2.00pm

GRAND HYATT HOTEL

KUALA LUMPUR

Updated: 12 Aug 2024

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh,

(SALUTATIONS TO BE PROVIDED)

1. I am honoured to be here today, and I extend my heartfelt appreciation to **The Asia Foundation** and **Mastercard Centre for Inclusive Growth** for creating this platform, namely Strivers Hub, which we will be launching today. I was informed that this website has been designed and improved over the past year to robustly support the entrepreneurial aspirations of women in Malaysia.

2. This venture is not merely about a website only; it is also about building innovative ecosystems that can empower women entrepreneurs through comprehensive support mechanisms. I was informed that this platform provides diverse support to women such as mentorship, microlearning, and community-building efforts, with partnership with various women-led organizations, including MumsVillage, KANITA, OKBoleh, and Kiddocare, all of whom are here today.

3. The timing of this launch aligns perfectly with recent governmental efforts, notably the Women in Gig and Business in Technology (Gig@Bit). The event was hosted by the *Jabatan Pembangunan Wanita (JPW)* in July focusing on accelerating the digital and online presence of women entrepreneurs. We must therefore maintain this momentum to continue making strides forward.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

UNLOCKING WOMEN ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

4. The Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) found through their 2016 economic census that women-owned enterprises registered was only 20.3 percent or 187,265 enterprises, out of a total of 920,624 enterprises registered in this country. The data shows that women's involvement in entrepreneurship is still lagging behind, especially when women make up almost half of the country's population.

5. However, the Government has always been committed to providing financing to women. In 2023, through the SME Integrated Plan of Action, a total of RM10.89 billion were allocated to SME programs, of which 60 women development programmes were carried out.

6. Our focus is clear. **We want to reach 30% women owned small and medium enterprises**, and in order to reach this number we need to continue specialised women financing programs by centering women in the design process to give women greater access to the capital they need in business.

7. However there is another challenge faced by women. I was informed that during the early stages of Strivers Hub's development, a thorough needs assessment was conducted and a significant challenge identified was **time poverty**, as many women try to balance their professional roles with familial and domestic responsibilities. Therefore this simplified and interactive platform can help navigate through the readily available modules available on the website that is easily accessible through your phones.

8. The importance of upskilling cannot be emphasized enough especially in today's rapidly changing digital economy. So I invite women entrepreneurs to sign on to the modules so you can equip yourselves with skills in AI, and learning how to use Canva to make your posters among other things!

9. The digital realm offers an unprecedented opportunity for empowerment, particularly through the flexibility it affords, thus I

invite all women entrepreneurs to create their presence online to expand their enterprises.

ROADSHOW BY THE ASIA FOUNDATION AND STRIVE

Ladies and Gentlemen,

10. I am made to understand that Strivers Hub will also begin its offline journey – it's roadshow to target over 100, 000 women visiting the platform next year. These roadshows will be opportunities to understand women's challenges deeper and capture the needs of women that will be incorporated into Strivers Hub.

11. The first visit would be to Penang, where I am proud to share that JPW will be working together with Strivers Hub. Penang is a

region renowned for its dynamic support of women's development initiatives and I look forward to seeing this program being rolled out.

12. In conclusion, I am immensely optimistic about the potential impact of Strivers Hub in empowering women nationwide. Each region of our country presents unique challenges and needs, all

of which deserve our dedicated attention. I eagerly look forward to the outcomes of this workshop and wish all participants the very best in today's activities.

Thank you. Wabillahi Taufiq Wal Hidayah
Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

Dato' Sri Hajah Nancy binti Haji Shukri
Minister of Women, Family & Community Development
12 August 2024