

# press release

## **Standard Chartered launches new website to help women entrepreneurs start and grow their businesses**

**11 March 2010, Malaysia** – To mark International Women’s Day, Standard Chartered Bank launched the Women in Business Resource Centre, an online tool designed to help women entrepreneurs start and grow their own businesses.

Standard Chartered believes entrepreneurship plays a key role in economic growth in the Bank’s markets in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. “We believe that women who are looking to start or grow their businesses have huge potential in Malaysia. The Women in Business Resource Centre will be a great tool for them to develop their entrepreneurial skills and progress to the next level,” commented Osman Morad, Managing Director and CEO Standard Chartered Bank, Malaysia Berhad. “Women entrepreneurs are becoming increasingly important drivers of growth, with forty to fifty per cent of businesses in developing markets owned by women<sup>1</sup>. In Malaysia, there are close to 83,000 woman-owned enterprises, mainly in services, manufacturing and agriculture sectors, and the numbers are expected to increase.”

Very few resources are targeted specifically at women entrepreneurs in these markets and therefore fail to address the specific challenges they face. These include a lack of female role models, access to financial education and confidence to start or grow their own businesses. .

The Resource Centre directly addresses these challenges by providing a variety of educational and interactive components aimed at small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), including modules and exercises on business planning, leadership skills and finances.

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<sup>1</sup> “Scaling up: Why women-owned businesses can recharge the global economy.” Ernst & Young, 2009.

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Joanna Fielding, CFO, Standard Chartered Bank China and Chair, Group Women's Council, commented "Women rarely have access to advice that has been targeted to their particular needs. Our Resource Centre offers practical information as well as tools that have been specifically designed for women entrepreneurs, around topics such as influence and negotiation, marketing to female consumers and the right reasons for scaling up one's business". Through the interactive platform, users can also share their feedback, business tips and contact a Standard Chartered SME team member. Inspirational video case studies of role models from Bangladesh, Nigeria, Hong Kong and Singapore are also featured on the site in order to provide examples of successful entrepreneurship.

The Resource Centre is currently available in seven languages, including traditional Chinese, simplified Chinese, Korean, Thai, Bahasa Indonesia, Hindi and Bengali. It is hosted online and is accessible globally via the Standard Chartered website ([www.standardchartered.com/sme-banking/resourcecentre/](http://www.standardchartered.com/sme-banking/resourcecentre/)), available to customers and the general public, as well as both men and women.

Som Subroto, Group Head, SME Banking, Standard Chartered Bank, commented "Standard Chartered is very keen to champion women entrepreneurs by providing the products, services and support they need to run successful businesses. Standard Chartered is committed to being the right partner for SMEs to help them achieve their business ambitions."

Last year, with the aim to increase women's participation in business, Standard Chartered Bank Malaysia collaborated with the Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Berhad (CGC) to offer women entrepreneurs the Portfolio Guarantee Scheme, a term financing facility range between RM100,000 and RM500,000 which provides working capital and financing of SME asset acquisitions.

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The Women in Business Resource Centre is one of the ways that Standard Chartered Bank is supporting its Clinton Global Initiative commitment to educate at least 5,000 women in Asia on financial literacy.

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## **Note to Editors:**

### **Standard Chartered – leading the way in Asia, Africa and the Middle East**

*Standard Chartered PLC, listed on both London and Hong Kong stock exchanges, ranks among the top 25 companies in the FTSE-100 by market capitalisation. The London-headquartered Group has operated for over 150 years in some of the world's most dynamic markets, leading the way in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Its income and profits have more than doubled over the last five years primarily as a result of organic growth.*

*Standard Chartered aspires to be the best international bank for its customers across its markets. The Group earns around 90 per cent of its income and profits in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, from its Wholesale and Consumer Banking businesses. The Group has over 1600 branches and outlets located in over 70 countries. The extraordinary growth of its markets and businesses creates exciting and challenging international career opportunities.*

*Leading by example to be the right partner for its stakeholders, the Group is committed to building a sustainable business over the long term and is trusted worldwide for upholding high standards of corporate governance, social responsibility, environmental protection and employee diversity. It employs around 70,000 people, nearly half of whom are women. The Group's employees are of 125 nationalities, of which about 70 are represented in the senior management.*

*For more information on Standard Chartered, please visit [www.standardchartered.com](http://www.standardchartered.com)*

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## **Standard Chartered in Malaysia**

*Standard Chartered Bank, a member of the Standard Chartered Group was established in Malaysia in 1875 and incorporated as Standard Chartered Bank Malaysia Berhad on 29 February 1984. As Malaysia's first bank, Standard Chartered leads the way through product innovation, consistent and strong growth performance and sustainability initiatives. The Bank's two businesses - Wholesale and Consumer Banking – provides a comprehensive range of financial products and services to corporates, institutions, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and individuals through its network of more than 30 branches across Malaysia.*

*In 2001, Standard Chartered UK established its third global technology & operations centre, Scope International, in Malaysia – the first international bank to do so in the country. Scope International provides software development, banking operations, IT support services and customer service capabilities to the Bank in up to 70 countries. It now houses the biggest software development company in the country, International Software Centre Malaysia (ISCM) and has a total workforce of more than 3,200 people.*

*Price Solutions Sdn Bhd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Standard Chartered Bank UK is also located in Malaysia. The company promotes and markets Standard Chartered's financial products in Malaysia through a network of direct sales agents.*

*Standard Chartered Saadiq Berhad, Standard Chartered Bank Malaysia Berhad's Islamic Banking subsidiary was established in November 2008. It offers a full suite of Shariah-compliant products and services to individuals and corporates through its inaugural Saadiq financial centre (branch) located in Taman Tun Dr Ismail, Kuala Lumpur.*

*Standard Chartered employs more than 5,000 employees in all its Malaysian operations.*