

REPORT

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON EMPOWERING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN AGRI-FOOD BUSINESS: TRANSITIONING FROM TRADITIONAL TO DIGITAL MARKETING



3-5 October 2017

The Straits Hotel and Suites Melaka, Malaysia



Ministry of Women, Family and Community
Development (KPWKM)

NAM Institute for the Empowerment of
Women, Malaysia (NIEW)



International Tropical Fruits Network
(TFNet)

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the advent of the internet and particularly social media, women has seamlessly broken into this new entrepreneurial model as this has enabled them to work from home – from blogging to creating micro-economies. This creates a shift to self-employment, a new form of entrepreneurial renaissance as people are able to work independently and flexibly; unencumbered by traditional concepts of employment.

Social media and the internet are fast becoming market indicators and influencers, especially on the younger generation. Customer attitudes and preferences change to reflect current behavioral variations. As there is a need to capture the modern buying habits of the new generation, entrepreneurs need to adapt and evolve in order to not be left out in this digital revolution – making use of these innovations to work to their advantage by moving from the traditional brick-and-mortar structure to a more digital, borderless organization.

In conjunction with the theme, The Straits Hotel & Suites, Melaka became the venue of choice for this year's collaborative event between the NAM Institute for the Empowerment of Women (NIEW) and the International Tropical Fruits Network (TFNet). This marks a second collaborative effort between NIEW and TFNet. The "International Workshop on Empowering Women Entrepreneurs in Agri-Food Business through Tropical Fruit Value Chain: Transitioning from Traditional to Digital Marketing" was held from the 3rd to 5th October 2017.

A total of 26 participants, all of which are business proprietors themselves as well as representatives from public and private agencies attended the 3-day event with key topics ranging from government policies for SMEs, trends influencing the agri-food business in the digital era; and digital branding and marketing strategies. Among the invited speakers for the keynote and plenary sessions were representatives from the SME Corporation Malaysia (SME Corp), University Putra Malaysia (UPM), and the Women Entrepreneur Network Association (WENA). Participants were broken up into groups of which they would present a short report on their approaches to digital marketing to enhance their business. Workshop participants also partook in a hands-on baking class where they were taught how to add value to tropical fruits and market it as a new product.

As the curtains drew to a close on the event, the participants presented their findings and reveled in the opportunity to increase their digital business acumen while expanding their business networks. Participants were also awarded with certificates from NIEW to acknowledge their involvement in the event.

2. OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this workshop was to equip women SME owners especially in the agri-food industry with knowledge on digital marketing for socioeconomic sustainability and development. The workshop also had the following objectives:

- I. To assess the issues and challenges in traditional and digital marketing and the impact of digital marketing while facilitating a mix of both styles to improve their business competitiveness
- II. To equip participants with new ideas on digital marketing concepts to enhance reach and visibility of their products
- III. To improve digital marketing engagement and focus on relationship-based interactions with their customers

3. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

At the end of the workshop participants should be able to implement a more sustainable business strategy based on digital marketing. This workshop is also a perfect opportunity for these entrepreneurs to expand or build business linkages from a variety of contacts, developing their networking skills. Moreover, this workshop could also act as a platform to increase the understanding of brand awareness strategies for improved product visibility and reach on the market.

4. PROGRAMME

DAY 1 – Tuesday, 3 October 2017	
TIME	PROGRAMME
8:30am–9:00am	Registration
9:00am–10:00am	Opening Ceremony and Welcoming Remarks <i>Mazni Yahya, Chief Assistant Director NAM Institute for the Empowerment of Women (NIEW)</i> <i>Dr. Mohd. Desa Hassim, Chief Executive Officer International Tropical Fruits Network (TFNet)</i>
10:00am–10:30am	GROUP PHOTO & TEA BREAK
10:30am–11:10am	Government Policy Initiatives for Malaysian SMEs – Digital Marketing for a New Era <i>Sharifah Najwa Syed Abu Bakar, Senior Director Business Advisory & Support, SME Corporation Malaysia</i>
11:10am–11:50am	The Agri-food Business – Trends, Risks, and Global Outlook <i>Dr. Juwaidah Sharifuddin, Senior Lecturer Department of Agribusiness and Bioresource Economics, University Putra Malaysia</i>

TIME	PROGRAMME
11:50am–12:30pm	Women and SMEs – Inspiring Women in Business <i>Zaharah Abd. Jalal, Vice President</i> <i>The Association of Women Entrepreneur Network Association (WENA)</i>
12:30pm–2:00 pm	LUNCH BREAK
2:00pm–3:00pm	Digital Entrepreneurship in the 21st Century – Creating Uncontested Market Space <i>Zakaria Yasin, Seven Layer Training & Consultancy Sdn. Bhd.</i>
3:00pm–4:30pm	Online Marketing Techniques <i>Rostam Mustafa, Gropo Holdings Sdn. Bhd.</i>
4:30pm–5:00 pm	TEA BREAK AND END OF DAY 1
DAY 2 – Wednesday, 4 October 2017	
TIME	PROGRAMME
ALL DAY	Site visit and hands-on training at King Hin Baking Studio, Bukit Piatu, Melaka I. Steamed Fruit Cake II. Chocolate Banana Cake III. Pineapple Tart IV. Fresh Fruit Tart <i>Siti Illah Nadiah Sheikh Salleh, Nad Party N Cakes Enterprise</i>
END OF DAY 2	
DAY 3 – Thursday, 5 October 2017	
TIME	PROGRAMME
8:30am–10:00am	Handling Chat Groups – Process of Trusting and Motivation via Online Chat Groups <i>Ismayanty Abd. Razak, AliExpress</i>
10:00am–10:30am	TEA BREAK
10:30am–12:30pm	Branding, Marketing, and the Moment of Truth: Building Desirable Relationships with Customers <i>Rozita Ja'afar, FTIM Designing Centre</i> <i>Norehan Hj. Kassim, Anprima Remedies Global</i>
12:30pm–2:00pm	LUNCH BREAK
2:00pm–3:30pm	Selected Reports and Presentations
3:30pm–4:30pm	Wrap-up Session: Highlights and Future Directions
4:30pm–5:00pm	TEA BREAK AND END OF EVENT

5. EVENT SYNOPSIS

DAY 1

The “**International Workshop on Empowering Women Entrepreneurs in Agri-Food Business through Tropical Fruit Value Chain: Transitioning from Traditional to Digital Marketing**” was held from the 3rd to 5th October 2017 at The Straits Hotel and Suites, Melaka. This is a second collaborative event between NAM Institute for the Empowerment of Women (NIEW) and the International Tropical Fruits Network (TFNet). The event began with welcoming addresses by the CEO of TFNet, Dr. Mohd. Desa Hassim and Mislina Dahlan, representing NIEW at 9:05AM.

GOVERNMENT POLICY INITIATIVES FOR MALAYSIAN SMES – DIGITAL MARKETING FOR A NEW ERA

Kicking off the event was a keynote from SME Corporation Malaysia (SME Corp). Sharifah Najwa Syed Abu Bakar presented the Malaysian Government’s policies and the status of SMEs in Malaysia. Participants were informed of various national strategies and government agencies as well as cooperatives to aid entrepreneurs venturing into the digital revolution. Moreover, she also emphasized the importance of evaluating and identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each business ventures to allow for continuous improvement. Ending her presentation, Ms. Sharifah Najwa presented a few successful examples of businesses under the purview of SME Corp.

During the Q&A session, a participant questioned the willingness of the Government to support local SMEs. Talking from the questioner’s experience, numerous bureaucracy issues have plagued them from securing assistance from the government. However, Ms. Sharifah Najwa assured that SME Corp will work tirelessly to assist them should any issue arise.

THE AGRI-FOOD BUSINESS – TRENDS, RISKS, AND GLOBAL OUTLOOK

From the Department of Agribusiness and Bioresource Economics, University Putra Malaysia, Dr. Juwaidah Sharifuddin outlined some of the key areas for growth and development in the food processing industry. In accordance to her theme, she also highlighted the impact of social media on the decision making of consumers in addition to the growing demand for halal food products which should be tapped. Dr. Juwaidah continued that entrepreneurs should adopt and incorporate social media as a marketing medium – to increase brand awareness and as a personalized customer relationship management (CRM) system.

After the presentation, Dr. Juwaidah was asked about her opinion on local agri-food products that have endured throughout the years. She was also asked about the policies imposed to allow the exportation of agri-food products from Malaysia. To the questions, Dr. Juwaidah replied that in Malaysia, most agri-food products that have endured are typically baked goods such as cookies or cakes. She was unable to comment on the export policies as the question was beyond her jurisdiction.

WOMEN AND SMES – INSPIRING WOMEN IN BUSINESS

As the vice-president of the Women Entrepreneur Network Association Malaysia (WENA), Zaharah Abd. Jalal relayed her own experiences starting out as a female entrepreneur in a then and still male-dominated arena. She reminded the participants that in today's digital world, the challenge is no longer how one could start a business but how one could build the business to ensure enduring success. Having failed a number of times, she told the participants that failure should be a catalyst for them to keep bouncing back and reinvent themselves. Part of WENA's strategic plan is to encourage women entrepreneurs to embrace innovation and technology into their business plan. Ms. Zaharah outlined a digital marketing plan as a guide for the participants. She also urged the participants to use social media as a platform for discourse among entrepreneurs.

DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE 21ST CENTURY – CREATING UNCONTESTED MARKET SPACE

The lead facilitator for the event, Zakaria Yasin explained about the "Blue Ocean Strategy" of which it is a marketing approach to create "blue oceans" of untapped new market space whereas "red oceans" are where businesses viciously compete with each other, turning the ocean "red with blood". He urged the participants to take advantage of the National Blue Ocean Strategy (NBOS) as the government has outlined a few strategies to aid entrepreneurs. He also described the importance of disruptive innovations such as the use of social media in today's digital atmosphere as well as thinking creatively and creating innovative approaches to continue to evolve.

Mr. Zakaria assigned the participants into groups of 4 for an assignment. He outlined the focus and strategies for each group to formulate and present by the end of the workshop.

ONLINE MARKETING TECHNIQUES

Continuing on the theme of the workshop and as a co-facilitator, Rostam Mustaffa went on a more practical approach by giving the participants a crash course on using Google Trends and other online tools such as Facebook and WhatsApp. He reminded participants to think like a customer and to carefully word a product, slogan, or company name with a name or tagline that has a tendency to be trending as these keywords would be picked up by Google Trends. He also stressed on the importance of creating a Unique Selling Point (USP) as these could become a key competitive advantage over rivals as well as attracting new customers.

DAY 2

HANDS-ON TRAINING: NAD PARTY N CAKES ENTERPRISE

Facilitated by Siti Illah Nadiah Sheikh Salleh of Nad Party N Cakes Enterprise, participants of the workshop had the opportunity to learn techniques of incorporating tropical fruits such as bananas, kiwifruits, dragon fruits, and pineapples into desserts such as cakes and tarts. She skillfully taught the participants on the basics of baking and shared with the participants recipes that were handed down to her from her mother.

DAY 3

HANDLING CHAT GROUPS – PROCESS OF TRUSTING AND MOTIVATION VIA ONLINE CHAT GROUPS

Coaching participants on using WhatsApp as their digital marketing tools, Ismayanty Abd. Razak taught the participants the mannerisms and etiquette of online chat groups. As a coach for AliExpress, she also reinforced the need to create an effective Unique Selling Point (USP) not just to attract new customers but also to encourage discourse between buyer and seller. In this way, customers are able to provide testimonials and recommendations thus improving product and brand visibility.

BRANDING, MARKETING, AND THE MOMENT OF TRUTH: BUILDING DESIRABLE RELATIONSHIPS WITH CUSTOMERS

Rozita Ja'afar and Norehan Kassim both gave personal accounts towards building their own personal brand. Starting with Ms. Rozita, she stressed that in today's social media era, personal branding can be a powerful tool to attract customers as well maintaining a good rapport with them. Echoing Ms. Rozita, Ms. Norehan also stressed on the importance of building an effective personal brand. The way the seller portrays themselves will be reflected in the products they are selling. Social media can aid potential customers in understanding the story of the product's conception as well as the person behind the product. Ms. Norehan also reminded the participants on the concept of niche marketing – the sale of products that are focused on a specific segment of the population.

SELECTED REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

The team from Noorhayati Mohamad Roslan and Shantini Morgan presented their findings based upon the guidelines set by Mr. Zakaria; on identifying the focus of the business as well as weaknesses that could hinder it.

WRAP-UP SESSION: HIGHLIGHTS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The Chief Assistant Director for NIEW, Mazni Yahya gave his thoughts about the workshop and hoped that the participants have gained new knowledge and to cherish new relationships built during the 3-day workshop. He then expressed his gratitude to all attendees and the organizing committee. Certificates of participation were awarded to each participant as well as certificates of appreciation to the members of the organizing committee by Mr. Mazni assisted by Mdm. Mislina. The workshop was officially closed by Mr. Mazni at 4:30PM.

6. ABOUT THE SPEAKERS



Sharifah Najwa Syed Abu Bakar
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Sharifah Najwa Syed Abu Bakar is currently the Senior Director, Business Advisory & Support Division, SME Corporation Malaysia, a Central Coordination Agency for SME development in Malaysia under the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI).

Her roles include representing the interests of the SMEs in trade negotiations and the Lead Negotiator for Malaysia for Economic and Technical Cooperation as well as the SME Working Committee for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) involving 16 nations (ASEAN + 6 Free-trade Partners). She is also involved in designing various developmental programme to facilitate internationalisation of SMEs in Malaysia and the region.

Prior to joining SME Corporation Malaysia, she was attached to the Securities Commission of Malaysia where she played an instrumental role in liberalisation of the Capital Market Industry, formulation of the Investment Banking framework in collaboration with the Central Bank of Malaysia, enactment of the Capital Market and Services Act 2007 and pioneered the regulatory framework governing the Financial Planners and Venture Capital Industry. She sees significant value in utilising her experience and networks from the capital and financial markets in spurring the development of SMEs across sectors that form the backbone of the Malaysian economy.

Holder of Bachelor of Accountancy with Honours from the University of Dundee, Scotland, United Kingdom and Certificate in Advanced Legal Drafting from the Judicial and Legal Training Institute of the Prime Minister's Department of Malaysia, she also had the privilege of spending 3 extraordinary years in the Republic of Sudan, Africa where she was involved in coordinating fundraising and extensive welfare activities involving children displaced by war, orphans, single mothers, old folks and underprivileged groups.



Dr. Juwaidah Sharifuddin
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Dr. Juwaidah graduated with a BSc in Business Administration from Drexel University, USA. She obtained her MBA from the Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). She also holds a PhD from Cardiff University, UK. She works as a Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Agriculture, UPM specializing in Agribusiness Marketing. Her main interest in research is

in agribusiness marketing and consumer behaviour towards agro-related and food products. To date, she has secured research grants worth nearly RM200,000 to conduct five projects from Universiti Putra Malaysia and the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. She has been involved in 5 consultancy projects at national as well as international levels. These include projects with the Malaysian Institute of Economic Research (MIER), Majlis Agama Islam Wilayah Persekutuan (MAIWP), The Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), and Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA). She also actively participated in the development and operations of Agri-Entrepreneur Incubation Program conducted yearly by UPM since 2012, and is appointed as one of the trainers in the program.



Zaharah Abd. Jalal

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Zaharah Abd. Jalal is the Vice President of The Association of Women Entrepreneur Network Malaysia (WENA) based in Damansara, Selangor, Malaysia. She is the Managing Director of MDEA Consultants (M) Sdn. Bhd., a company that specializes in training corporate organizations of diverse industries and government institutions both locally and abroad. The company has also been involved in financial advisory and funding arrangements for SMEs. She also founded Sparx Byond Lab, an outfit that builds digital marketing platforms to look into aggregating producers and customers to sell & buy agri products, curates and conduct entrepreneurship basecamps, bootcamps and maker lab hackerthons, IOT programs, and Women & Craft for the world.

Ms. Zaharah also owns ventures in education and training for learners to attain international certifications. As part of the entrepreneurship ecosystem building member, she partners with other SMEs to conduct business clinics nationwide and enterprise development for start-ups and existing SMEs and entrepreneurs under the Ministry of Finance Malaysia (MOF) programs. As an EXCO member of WENA for many years, she ensures that members of WENA adopt technology; being one of the pillars of the association. Only with such initiative would members be more efficient in the process of doing business and effective management of the organization. She is also actively involved with the ASEAN Women Entrepreneur Network as Malaysian Focal Point Association and the Great Women Malaysia, which is a marketing arm for Malaysian Women Products to be marketed to ASEAN countries and the world. In 2015, she was awarded an Outstanding ASEAN Women Entrepreneur in Hanoi at the AWEN Summit.

As a board member of another Social Entrepreneur Enterprise, Girls in Tech (GIT) Malaysia based in the USA, issues like impact for humanity is a current focus that she has been given responsibility to research and curate certification curriculum and development to be in line with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of the United Nations. She is currently collaborating with the plantation faculty of UiTM Jasin.



Zakaria Yasin

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With 10 years of working experience in the banking sector, private colleges, training and consulting companies, non-governmental organizations, and government-linked companies; Zakaria Yasin is presently the Director of Seven Layer Training & Consultancy Sdn. Bhd. and TradeBound International Sdn. Bhd. He obtained his bachelor's degree in psychology from the International Islamic University, Malaysia; a Diploma in Public Administration, from ITM, Malaysia; and a Diploma in Translation (Mass), from PPIM-DBP, Malaysia. A qualified practitioner of Neuro-Semantics, Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NS-NLP) with experience in the field of training and consultancy, Mr. Zakaria is a trainer and coach for innovation and creativity, and Blue Ocean Strategy and is also a certified trainer for the Human Resource Department, Malaysia. He is currently a member of the Board of Directors for Koperasi Generasi Felda Berhad, and Pertubuhan Crypto Republik.



Rostam Mustaffa

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Rostam Mustaffa is a personal coach, mentor, and trainer having developed online marketing programmes for entrepreneurs. He obtained his Master's degree in Financial Planning from SEGI University, Malaysia and a double degree in Accounting and Finance from the University of Plymouth, England. A founder of a few companies with a total of 18 years working experience, Mr. Rostam is an NFNLP practitioner and a certified trainer and member of the World Class Achiever Million Dollar Table (MDRT) from The Premier Association of Financial Professionals, USA.



Siti Illah Nadiah Sheikh Salleh

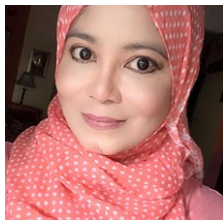
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Siti Illah Nadiah a graduate from Stamford College, Malaysia is the founder of Nad Party N Cakes Enterprise. Nadiah obtained an entrepreneurship certification from MARA, Malaysia and completed a halal certification course conducted by JAKIM. A passionate home baker, she eventually started her bakery business, selling her baked goods online. Nowadays, Nadiah is often busy conducting baking classes for children and adults.



Ismayanty Abd. Razak
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Ismayanty is a graduate of University Putra Malaysia with a degree in Design in Architecture. She has acquired a total of 10 years working experience in various multinational corporations, consulting and coordinating multiple projects. She started a passion project selling women accessories online in 2013 which eventually lead her to begin coaching and leading online marketing chat groups. Ms. Ismayanty is currently an AliExpress user and business community coach.



Rozita Ja'afar
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A graduate from Singapore Fashion College with a Diploma in Fashion Design and a Diploma of Business Administration and Communications from Stamford College, Malaysia, Rozita Ja'afar is the founder and principal of FTIM Designing Centre (FTIMDC). The centre was set up in 1999, producing numerous fashion and design graduates. Among her greatest achievements was being featured in the Malaysia Book of Records in 2002 for creating the "Sweets Dresses" display out of 200,000 candies for the National Museum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. With over 25 years of experience in the fashion industry, she is also a consultant for Kraftangan Malaysia, MARA, and an Image and Personality Consultant. Constantly featured in local fashion magazines, she has written numerous in demand fashion and design books such as "Sulaman Benang Manik Labuci" which has been translated into Bahasa Indonesia. She also organizes workshops for beadwork and sequin embroideries, personality and image seminars, and fashion shows throughout the country and Brunei.



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The founder of Anprima Remedies Global, Norehan Kassim holds a degree in herbal science from George Washington University. As a principal consultant for product knowledge and practical application, she is responsible for the formulation of all Anprima product lines. A certified teacher in fine arts on ceramic from the International Porcelain Artists and Teachers (IPAT), Texas, USA, she is also the founder and trainer at Kelopak Gallery. Her works have been awarded the Excellent Achievement on Design on Glass

and Ceramic at the Groom Big Exhibition in 2010 organized by the Malaysian Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI).

7. EXPENDITURE

NO.	ITEM	AMOUNT (RM)
1	Accommodation	26,950.00
2	Course development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modules • Speakers and facillitators • Hands-on training • Course materials • Logistics 	42,511.50
3	Printed matter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bunting • Programme book 	538.50
TOTAL		70,000.00

8. ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS



MINISTRY OF WOMEN, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (KPWKM), MALAYSIA

The establishment of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWKM) is a manifestation of the country's aspirations, pursuant to the Fourth World Conference on Women, which was held in Beijing in 1995, and has been implemented in accordance to the document entitled "Platform for Action For The Development of Women towards the Year 2000", i.e.: "Establishment of a full-fledged ministry that demonstrates the government's commitment to raise the status of women in this country".



NAM INSTITUTE FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN, MALAYSIA (NIEW)

The NAM Institute for the Empowerment of Women, Malaysia (NIEW) under the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development was established on 1 July 2006 following the First NAM Ministerial Meeting on the Advancement of Women in 2005. Its vision is to be the catalyst in providing visionary and leadership roles including setting priorities and broad policy directions for itself and its regional offices together with NAM

countries towards promoting and enhancing the advancement of women. Included among the main activities is capacity building for NAM member countries in collaboration with other agencies including the diplomatic community, international bodies, private sector, academia and civil society in ensuring empowerment of women and achieve gender equality in NAM countries.



INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL FRUITS NETWORK (TFNet)

The International Tropical Fruits Network (TFNet) is an independent and self-financing global network established under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) with the mandate of facilitating sustainable global development of the tropical fruit industry in relation to production, consumption, and trade.

TFNet collaborates with its member countries to scale up income for tropical fruits smallholders, by enhancing productivity and market access through improved technology and integration into the value chain; increase the global demand, awareness and trade of tropical fruits through improved safety, quality and conformity practices; and promote tropical fruit consumption to tackle the issue of imbalanced diets.

9. SECRETARIAT

NIEW

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 Mislina Haji dahlan
 Mashitah Abd. Khani
 Mohd. Zaidi Makzin
 Rian Nordiansyah Ramli
 Kharul Zaman Mohd. Noor
 Khairul Fazril Abdul Wahab

TFNet

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 Hariyatul Asni Abdul Rani
 Christian Anthony T. Cangao
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 Arifurrahman Rusman
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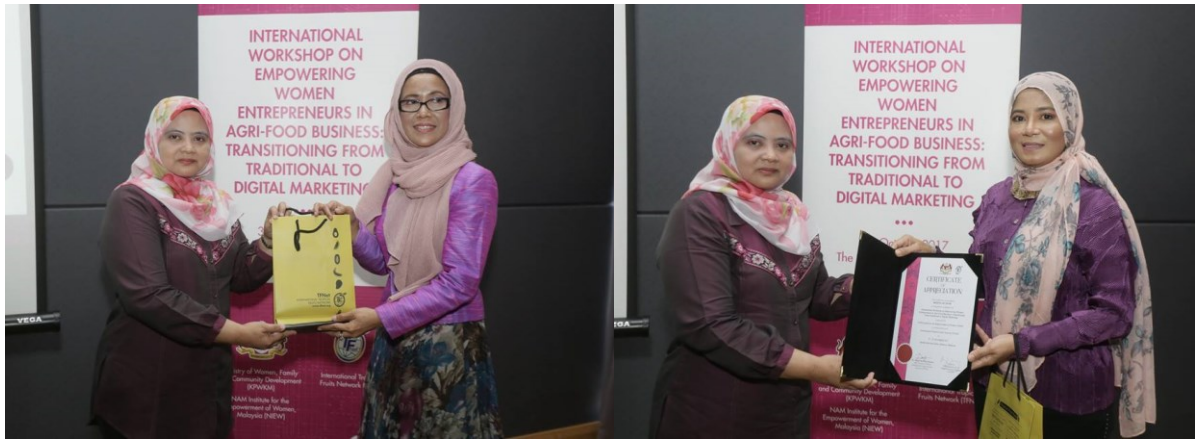
11. CONCLUSION

The workshop was a platform to gather women entrepreneurs and develop their business networks while also allowing them to share their experiences with the other participants. Trainings and presentations from industry experts will also enhance their competitive edge in the digital ecosystem to improve their socioeconomic livelihoods, thus contributing to the country's economy.

12. PHOTOS

a. AWARDING TOKEN OF APPRECIATION TO PRESENTERS





b. AWARDING CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION









c. BEHIND THE SCENES



Mr. Mazni Yahya delivering his closing address



Ms. Shantini Morgan



Group photo after hands-on training



What happened Dato Sri?



Secretariat with Mr. Mazni Yahya, moderators (Mr. Zakaria Yasin & Mr. Rostam Mustafa) and honorable participants (Dato Sri Suhaimi Mohamad & Datin Sri Norfazilah Thambi)



