

press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

8 March 2010, Singapore – 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 across the Bank’s markets in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Women entrepreneurs are becoming increasingly important drivers of growth, with 40 to 50 per cent of businesses in developing markets owned by women¹.

Very few resources are targeted specifically for women entrepreneurs 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.

Kavita Bedi, Head of SME Product & Strategy, Singapore and Malaysia, said,

“We believe that women who are looking to start or grow their businesses have huge potential in Singapore. At Standard Chartered, we understand that entrepreneurs look to banks for more than just financing. They need a banking partner who is able to help them build a successful business and have access to

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

information and tools such as modules and exercises on business planning, leadership skills and finances. We are committed to help them in this journey and have identified The *Women in Resource Business Centre* as a great tool for them to develop their entrepreneurial skills and progress to the next level.

From research, we understand that advice targeting at women entrepreneurs' needs are still not readily available. To help women run successful businesses, it is important to provide them with the products, services and support. Our Resource Centre offers practical information such as analysing balance sheets, controlling cash flow as well as tools that have been specifically designed for women entrepreneurs, such as leadership practices, management styles, negotiation skills, and showcasing successes of other women entrepreneurs.”

Belinda Chua, Managing Director of Flower Diamond said,

“The Women in Business Resource Centre is a comprehensive site which provides women entrepreneurs with practical tips on running a business such as balance sheet management to strategies for penetrating new markets and soft skills such as leadership and negotiation. I believe that it’s a practical tool for entrepreneurs who want to start or grow their business.”

The Resource Centre is currently available in eight languages, including traditional Chinese, simplified Chinese, Korean, Thai, Bahasa Indonesia, Hindi, Bengali and English. It is hosted online and is accessible anytime via the Standard Chartered website (www.standardchartered.com/sme-banking/resourcecentre/).

In December 2008, at the inaugural Clinton Global Initiative, Asia, Standard Chartered committed to a women’s empowerment programme to enhance financial literacy, financial planning, investment and capacity building for women owners of small businesses. The Women in Business Resource Centre is one of the ways that the Bank is supporting its Clinton Global Initiative commitment to educate at least 5,000 women in Asia on financial literacy.

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For further information, please contact:

Evangeline Tan

Corporate Affairs, Singapore

Standard Chartered Bank

Tel: +65 6725 7924

HP: +65 9665 1683

Email: Evangeline.Tan@sc.com

Note to Editors:

Standard Chartered in Singapore is part of an international banking group with an extensive network of over 1,700 branches and outlets in more than 70 countries in the Asia Pacific Region, South Asia, the Middle East, Africa, the United Kingdom and the Americas.

Standard Chartered has a history of 150 years in Singapore, opening its first branch here in 1859 and in October 1999 was among the first international banks to receive a Qualifying Full Bank (QFB) licence, an endorsement of the Group's long-standing commitment to its businesses in the country.

It serves both Consumer and Wholesale Banking customers. Consumer Banking provides credit cards, personal loans, mortgages, deposit taking and wealth management services to individuals and small to medium sized enterprises. Wholesale Banking provides corporate and institutional clients with services in trade finance, cash management, lending, securities services, foreign exchange, debt capital markets and corporate finance.

The Bank employs over 5,700 people in Singapore and has a network of 18 branches, 28 ATMs, and 6 Priority Banking centres. Standard Chartered is the only international bank to offer NETS service, giving its customers access to EFTPOS at over 17,000 outlets islandwide. The Bank's global businesses - Consumer and Wholesale Banking - are managed out of Singapore, as is its global Technology & Operations function.

Key awards/achievements

- Leading the way through product innovation, for example, MortgageOne, e\$aver, CashOne, Business Instalment Loan, Business\$aver, FamilyLink, LinkOne & Visa Infinite
- *First Singapore \$100 million Fixed Rate Note bond offering by The Central American Bank for Economic Integration, a Latin American issuer*
- Xtra\$aver named "Best Deposit Product in Asia Pacific and Gulf States" (Asian Banker Journal - 2007)
- Best Bank in Singapore (The Asset Triple A Country Awards – 2009)
- Best Debt House in Singapore (The Asset Triple A Awards - 2003, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009)
- Best Trade Finance Bank in Singapore (Global Finance – 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009)
- Country Deal of the Year, Singapore (Islamic Finance News Awards 2009)
- Singapore Capital Markets Deal of the Year (IFR Asia Review of the Year 2009)
- Retail Bank of the Year (Asian Banking and Finance – 2007, 2008)
- Best branch initiative - Vivo City branch (Asian Banking and Finance – 2007, 2008)
- Best self-service Initiative - Online banking (Asian Banking and Finance – 2008)
- Best core banking system initiative - Virtual banking relationship centre (Asian Banking and Finance – 2008)

- Best Corporate and Employee Citizenship Award (HRM 2008, 2009)
- Leader in HR practices (Singapore HR Awards 2009)
 - *Learning and Human Capital Development*
 - *Talent Management, Retention and Succession Planning*
 - *Corporate Social Responsibility*
 - *Performance Management (Special Mention)*
 - *Regional/International/Global HR practices (Special Mention)*
- Best Graduate Development Practices and Fair Employment Practices (HRM 2010)
- President's Social Service Award 2008
- National Volunteerism and Philanthropy Centre Corporate Citizen Award for Volunteerism 2009