

press 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 will launch 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 <country>. The Women in Resource Business Centre will be a great tool for them to develop their entrepreneurial skills and progress to the next level,” commented <name>], <title> in <country>. Women entrepreneurs are becoming increasingly important drivers of growth, with forty to fifty per cent of businesses in developing markets owned by women¹. *[In <country>, <>% of businesses are run by women.] or [In <country>, <>% of businesses are characterised as small and medium enterprises, which represents a significant contribution to the local economy.]* 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. Joanna Fielding, CFO, Standard Chartered Bank China and Chair, Group Women’s Council, commented “Women rarely have access to advice that has been

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

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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/), 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."

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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For further information please contact:

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