

Asia Pacific Women Entrepreneurs Exchange Program Overview

This program, which started in 2016, highlights the business activities of women entrepreneurs who have contributed to building a bridge between Japan and the Asia-Pacific region, referred to as “bridge women”; in order to promote mutual trust and friendship between Japan and Asia-Pacific countries from women’s perspective. The program began by conducting research from August to October 2018 on the business activities of these bridge women and the business associations supporting women entrepreneurs in their respective countries. The research team listened their narratives about their business experiences and personal lives, then identified and analyzed the challenges and lessons learned.

Subsequently, a symposium entitled “Connecting the Bridges: Women Entrepreneurs in Asia-Pacific Countries” was held in Tokyo on November 18, 2018. The bridge women were invited, as role models, to deliver presentations on how they overcame the challenges at different life stages and discuss future courses of action for promoting international networks among women entrepreneurs and supporting organizations. The following day (November 19), these bridge women learned about the experiences of three Japanese women entrepreneurs and conducted a workshop on business as a solution to social issues.

This report presents the outcomes of the program’s research, symposium, and workshop. All the activities of this program, including the preparation of this report, were planned and implemented under the guidance of the Project Advisory Committee, whose members are listed below. It must be noted, however, that this report does not necessarily represent or express official positions of the Government of Japan.

Chair	Ms. Machiko Osawa	Professor, Faculty of Integrated Arts and Social Sciences, Japan Women’s University
Committee	Ms. Mari Hamada	CEO, Nadeshiko Voice
Members	Ms. Sayaka Watanabe	Founder and CEO, re:terra lab and re:terra co., ltd.
	Mr. Kenji Matsumoto	Manager, General Affairs Division, Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry
	Mr. Shintaro Matoba	Director, Overseas Research Planning Division, Middle East and Africa Division, Overseas Research Department, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)