

Investing in Women is Smart Business

Solomon Islands Economic Empowerment

November 25, 2016

Project: Support to Solomon Islands Women in Business Association

Outcome area: Economic empowerment

Project partner: Solomon Islands Women in Business Association (SIWIBA)

Total funding: \$485,000

Funding timeframe: 2014–2017

SIWIBA acknowledges women's economic empowerment as a key factor to women's development and participation in the country. SIWIBA's vision is to inspire women to realise their full potential, importance and status and be increasingly recognised in Solomon Islands' society. SIWIBA is providing different training that suit both formal and informal businesses.

With support from Pacific Women, SIWIBA has established a Business Development Centre, where women can access training, learning materials and resources. Training is offered in a range of areas so that women can learn new skills in order to set up new income generating activities, as well as improve their ability to manage existing businesses. The work done by SIWIBA is to transition women to the formal economy.

At the end of 2015 SIWIBA hosted a gala to link SIWIBA to corporate houses and be part of the bigger picture in business. This led to a bigger event, the 2016 Women in Business Awards in July 2016. The Women in Business Awards was a milestone for the organisation. There were awards for both the formal and informal sectors recognising business management styles, innovation and skills.

A series of trainings has been conducted for SIWIBA members depending on the interest and demand from members, which range from floral display, phonic reading systems, advanced sewing, leadership and good governance, starting your own business and cookery trainings. Accredited local business trainers within SIWIBA's pool of skilled resources are engaged to conduct trainings for its members.

West Guadalcanal's Ms Mary Roberts is one of the many women in business in the Solomon Islands, who've benefitted from these trainings.

'Before this training I treated costing and pricing as the same thing when running my business, but now I know they're quite different. Now I can hopefully attract more customers by pricing my products correctly,' she said. Ms Roberts is one of SIWIBA's newest members.

With support from Pacific Women, SIWIBA plans to continue its mission 'to promote, develop and empower women's participation as business owners in the private sector' in the Solomon Islands.



Businesswoman Ms Mary Roberts from West Guadalcanal is one of SIWIBA's newest members. Photo: DFAT/Solomon Islands Post.

This Story of Change was originally published in the [Pacific Women Annual Progress Report 2015-2016](#). All values are consisted with that reporting period. For the most up-to-date value of activities, visit our [interactive map](#).