

Press Release

Banpu Joins Forces with CSR Partners to Empower Local Social Enterprises, Shining a Spotlight on Chiang Mai for the "Impactful Locals, National Boost" Campaign

- The 13th Banpu Champions for Change project calls for entry, apply now until April 7, 2024. For more information, please visit www.facebook.com/banpuchampions.

Banpu Public Company Limited, a leading international versatile energy provider, collaborated with ChangeFusion to kick off "Banpu Champions for Change: BC4C" roadshow in the northern region, starting at Chiang Mai Province. Featuring the concept of "Impactful Locals, National Boost," this year's project propelled the emergence of new social enterprises (SE) across the nation, thereby bolstering community economies as the bedrock of the national economic landscape. The project served as a platform for SEs in the area to exchange knowledge, experiences, and innovative ideas. Highlights included enlightening talks by esteemed SE figures, workshops on crafting business plans, and an immersive visit to the social enterprise Buddy HomeCare, an esteemed alumnus of the project. These dynamic activities unfolded at the Chiang Mai Cultural Center, attracting over 50 aspiring SE entrepreneurs from the northern region eager to participate and drive positive change.

Mr. Rattapon Sukhunthee, Head of Corporate Communications at BANPU Public Company Limited, said that "The roadshow aimed at reaching out to the new generation of changemakers within the community with passion for instigating positive transformation in their localities to join our project. Chiang Mai, renowned for its spatial potential and vast market, serves as an ideal setting for this endeavor. The province presents a diverse landscape of complex social issues, rich cultural diversity, and a vibrant artisanal scene. Of paramount importance is the presence of a dynamic young generation brimming with innovative ideas and boundless energy. These factors form a solid foundation for SEs to flourish, simultaneously addressing pressing social concerns such as inequality reduction, fostering career and educational opportunities, environmental conservation, and bolstering the local economy. Following Chiang Mai, our journey will extend to Nakhon Ratchasima and Bangkok. In its 13th year, BC4C underscores Banpu's unwavering dedication to empowering Thai SE entrepreneurs. Through strategic partnerships with both central and local agencies committed to effecting change at the grassroots level, we aim to catalyze a robust and impactful local economy, contributing to Thailand's overall prosperity under the theme of 'Impactful Locals, National Boost'."

During this roadshow, attendees engaged in compelling activities such as design workshops and sessions dedicated to crafting impactful business statements. These exercises empowered SE entrepreneurs to vividly conceptualize challenges, social impact indicators, and the precise operational goals of their enterprises. This clarity served to enhance investors' understanding of opportunities and the value they can derive from their investments. Moreover, insightful discussions led by SE alumni, including Bhudpoj Pholpipattanaphong from Hmong Cyber (BC4C, Batch 9) and Yujjaresh Sommana from Craft de Quarr (BC4C, Batch 8), offered valuable experiences and insights to participants.

Additionally, an excursion was arranged to visit the progress of SE alumni in Chiang Mai Province, 'Buddy HomeCare,' which was part of Batch 11 of the BC4C project. This social enterprise is dedicated to providing opportunities for ethnic youth to undergo a 420-hour training program to become caregivers for the elderly. By offering this training, Buddy HomeCare not only fosters careers and generates income for ethnic youth but also contributes to promoting good health among the elderly in the Chiang Mai area. To date, the initiative has successfully developed 177 caregivers who have provided healthcare to 4,048 elderly individuals.

During the northern roadshow, the project capitalized on the opportunity to engage with over 10 SE alumni in the north, fostering information exchange and nurturing strong relationships. Recognizing the value of a robust SE network, the initiative provided local SEs with reliable mentors, mutual support, and opportunities for future business collaborations.

Mr. Sunit Shrestha, the founder and Managing Director of ChangeFusion, a non-profit institute under the Thai Rural Reconstruction Movement Foundation under Royal Patronage, highlighted, “Throughout our collaboration with Banpu on the BC4C project, we have witnessed transformative changes unfolding across various sectors under the steadfast leadership of local SEs. For instance, in the northern region, 'Hmong Cyber' has been instrumental in driving economic growth through community tourism, thereby enhancing the quality of life for hilltribe youth and ethnic groups. These youths are empowered to utilize learning platforms, thereby turning it into a viable career path to augment their family's income. Similarly, 'Craft de Quarr' is instrumental in crafting products rooted in local wisdom and traditional art, providing broader market access.”

Ms. Onpreeya Sano, an 18-year-old Karen youth and one of the caregivers at the "Buddy Homecare" social enterprise, shared her journey, saying, “I have always aspired to become a nurse. I even passed the examination to study nursing. However, due to financial constraints within my family, I had to postpone my dreams and seek employment to sustain our livelihood. Initially, I worked in elderly care in Bangkok. Later, I learned about Buddy Homecare's training

program for basic elderly care, which also offered scholarships. Encouraged by this opportunity, I applied to join the project." "Over the past 7 months, I have served as a caregiver, providing home care for the elderly. This hands-on experience has been invaluable, allowing me to acquire essential skills such as temperature monitoring, blood pressure measurement, patient repositioning and hygiene maintenance, as well as tube feeding administration. These skills are crucial for a career in nursing. Presently, I am able to financially support my family and save for my future education. My ultimate goal is to use the income from this profession to pursue my dream of studying nursing."

For SE entrepreneurs, students, and individuals with innovative ideas aimed at addressing social issues sustainably, applications for the BC4C Year 13 program are open until April 7, 2024. Check your eligibility and apply online at <https://bit.ly/3V56eSz> for the Incubation Program or <https://bit.ly/3lvUKzH> for the Acceleration Program. For more details, follow us on www.facebook.com/banpuchampions, or contact us via phone at 087-075-4815 or email at banpuchampions@gmail.com.

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About Banpu

Banpu Public Company Limited is a leading international versatile energy provider, operating 3 core groups of businesses - energy resources, energy generation, and energy technology in Thailand, Indonesia, China, Australia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Japan, the United States of America and Vietnam.

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