



SUCCESS STORY

SHE Investments Levels Up its Support to Female Entrepreneurs



Geachleang, SHE Investments' Communications and Community Engagement Officer, practices her photography skills during a content creation session during DI's social media training. Photo Credit: Development Innovations

“After attending Social Media Training at Development Innovations, I learned how to better plan social media content on Facebook. Additionally, I was able to share this knowledge with others by running a workshop with women participants in our Accelerator Program here at SHE Investments. They told me that this workshop was really useful to them as they are now able to use their Facebook pages more effectively.”
– Seng Geachleang, SHE Investments' Communications and Community Engagement Officer

Find out more about SHE Investments here:
<https://www.sheinvestments.com/>

Find out more about Development Innovations' activities and services:
www.development-innovations.org

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
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<http://stories.usaid.gov>

At the end of 2016, SHE Investments had successfully applied for a grant from Development Innovations (DI) to develop a business information portal to serve its audience of informal micro and small-sized women led businesses in Cambodia. Little did they know that two years later, they wouldn't just be a grantee, but a long-term Development Innovations partner.

SHE Investments is a social enterprise founded by Program Manager and Head Facilitator Lida Loem, Managing Director Celia Boyd and Business Consultant and Ngeay Ngeay Manager James Wilson. Founded in 2014, SHE Investments' mission is to support female entrepreneurs, who account for 65% of business owners but only 1% of formal businesses, to scale their businesses and create social and economic impact for communities. To respond to a growing demand for information on business registration and taxation, they realized they needed a website to help provide information to more women at the same time.

Based on this problem statement, the team was awarded a small grant, complemented by additional funding support from EZECOM to develop Ngeay Ngeay, a free and user-friendly resource to help informal, women-led businesses to register with their local government entities like the Tax Department and Ministry of Commerce and ultimately help them to scale and formalize their businesses. [Ngeay Ngeay](#) was launched in August 2018.

But the grant was just part of the engagement with DI. Initially, SHE Investments did not have much engagement with tech. “We used social media, that is about it,” described Celia. Through engagement with DI's technical advisors, they learned about both the human and financial capital required to power its website. They soon became familiar with finding a platform to host Ngeay Ngeay, monitoring, analytics and developing a vision of what a successful website should look like.

The SHE Investments team also connected to DI's network to meet with future partners. “They helped us find corporate partners. This added a lot of extra value,” described Celia. Co-founder Lida Loem added, “I feel like SHE Investments has more brand recognition now.”

In anticipation of Ngeay Ngeay's launch, the SHE team also engaged their staff in DI's social media workshops, which has translated to gains in engagement with SHE Investments from an increase of 4,200 to 11,000 likes on their Facebook page, to having more people come to their events. “We used to struggle to get 10 people to come to our monthly free events. Now we average 25-30 attendees and we don't even pay to advertise,” remarked Celia.

Communications and Community Engagement Officer Seng Geachleang attended DI's social media and video training courses and saw marked improvement in her ability to manage their communications, and she was able to produce Ngeay Ngeay's launch video. Now, she is producing videos to showcase SHE Investment's other programs on her own. “I didn't have any skills for video before. It looked really hard. But [the DI trainers] made it really simple for someone who never edited before.”

Ngeay Ngeay gave SHE Investments the credibility and confidence to move forward. Strong partnerships have not just been cultivated with Ministries in the Royal Government of Cambodia, but also beyond Cambodia's borders as the team developed relationships with counterparts in Vietnam and Myanmar to launch Mekong Women in Business, a regional business accelerator for women.

Together with Development Innovations, the SHE Investments team will be taking their programs to the next level over the next year. “Playing on our respective strengths,” described Celia, SHE Investments and DI are working together to grow and optimize SHE Investments' incubator and accelerator programs for women.