



PRESS RELEASE:

Grow Asia launches USD 1.6 million multi-donor impact fund to drive women's economic empowerment in Asia's food system

- The impact fund will support initiatives in the agri-food sector that amplify the business case for women's economic empowerment and incentivize public and private investment into gender-inclusive actions, practices, and policies - especially for small rural enterprises.
- The Government of Canada - through the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) - and Corteva Agriscience have come onboard as anchor partners of the fund.
- Grow Asia aims to raise a total of USD 5.6m through the fund over the next three years, using a blend of public and private investments to drive more gender-inclusive practices across Asia's food and agriculture sector.
- Learn more about Grow Asia's work on women's economic empowerment [here](#).

Singapore, 22 August 2022: [Grow Asia](#) – a multi-stakeholder platform that builds partnerships for more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable food systems - has launched a USD 1.6m multi-donor impact fund to support women's economic empowerment in Asia's agri-food sector. The fund will support programs that amplify the business case for women's empowerment and incentivize public and private investment into gender-inclusive actions, practices, and policies – especially for small rural enterprises.

A third of the agriculture labor force in Asia are women, yet women face more barriers to finance, land, training, and inputs relative to men. Research shows that empowering women in agriculture drives equitable economic growth, injects more cash into rural economies, and increases investments in climate-smart solutions and services that are essential for long-term resilience.

The fund is anchored by a USD 800k investment from Canada's [International Development Research Centre](#) (IDRC), and a matching investment from [Corteva Agriscience](#). Building on these foundational investments, Grow Asia aims to raise and channel USD 5.6m through the fund into women's economic empowerment programs over the next three years.

A comprehensive suite of programs has been designed that will leverage the expertise of all parties and build on Grow Asia's previous work in Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, and Viet Nam, which has been funded by the Australian Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade.

In the coming months, Grow Asia will launch three complementary multi-donor impact funds to support parallel activities that promote [agri-food innovation](#), [responsible agricultural investing](#), and [climate change adaptation and resilience in the region](#). Announcements will follow between now and October.

“Grow Asia's central mission is to build more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable food systems. To do this, we need to engage women at every stage of agricultural value chains and empower them as decision-makers and leaders,” says Beverley Postma, Executive Director of Grow Asia. *“The commitment of our long-standing partners like the government of Canada and Corteva Agriscience to championing inclusive and business-critical investments gives me a renewed confidence that, while we have a long way to go, a more equitable system is on the horizon.”*

"IDRC is delighted to see this catalytic match-funding from Corteva Agriscience, which builds on our investment in empowering Southeast Asia's women farmers as decision-makers and champions of green recovery," says Anindya Chatterjee, Asia Regional Director of the IDRC. "This is the first of four blended Impact Funds launched by Grow Asia, and we are excited to see Corteva step up as pioneers of this innovative public-private investment model. We commend their commitment to sustainable, inclusive agriculture in the region, and look forward to seeing the impact of this collective effort."

"We know that women in agriculture feed more than just their families and communities; their efforts help feed the world. Corteva is proud to be a part of this journey to help them thrive and make an impact that will last for generations," says Ravinder Balain, Managing Director for ASEAN at Corteva Agriscience. "This collaboration is an important step in addressing the needs within the food system that nourishes our region. By uniting our efforts with partners like IDRC and Grow Asia, we can drive lasting positive outcomes for women across the agricultural value chain."

Current programs under the multi-donor impact fund include:

- **AGREE** (ASEAN Green Recovery through Equity and Empowerment): an initiative supported by the International Development Research Centre in Cambodia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam to demonstrate how COVID-19 recovery can be gender- and climate-responsive. AGREE is mapping current gender-inclusive practices in agriculture value chains, testing pilot interventions with corporate partners, and informing policy that champions women as agents of climate action.
- **GrowHer**: a community-based platform that connects women to learning events, essential resources and best-practice sharing from other women agripreneurs. The platform was launched by Grow Asia alongside AGREA, Corteva Agriscience and WOMAG.
- **THRIVE** (Train Her to Promote Resilient, Inclusive Value Chains and Economic Empowerment): a joint initiative between Grow Asia and Corteva Agriscience launched in 2021 to (1) increase women farmers' farm management, digital and business skills; and (2) support women farmers, influencers and agripreneurs with business development and networking opportunities.



Pictured (left to right): Ravinder Balain (Head of Business of ASEAN, Corteva Agriscience), Beverley Postma (Executive Director, Grow Asia), and H.E. Jean-Dominique Ieraci (High Commissioner of Canada to the Republic of Singapore)

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About Grow Asia:

Grow Asia is a multi-stakeholder platform established in 2015 by the World Economic Forum and the ASEAN Secretariat to cultivate more inclusive, resilient and sustainable food systems in Southeast Asia. Grow Asia does this by brokering commercial and non-profit partnerships between the global and regional public, private, civil society, academic and farmer organizations that make up the Grow Asia Network, creating an ecosystem that supports knowledge sharing, collaboration, innovation and policy change.

Grow Asia comprises the regional Grow Asia Secretariat in Singapore; 6 Country Partnerships; and 44 Working Groups, organized around specific cross-cutting issues (e.g., agritech) or value chains (e.g., corn). Today, Grow Asia engages over 600 partner organizations through its Country Partnerships in Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Viet Nam, reaching close to 2.5 million smallholder farmers.

In 2020, Grow Asia was accredited as an Entity Associated with ASEAN due to the important role Grow Asia plays in the region, particularly in facilitating multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable agriculture development.

Learn more: www.growasia.org