

# SME WEEKLY NEWS

(31 May 2021 – 4 June 2021)

Countries	Highlights
<p><b>MALAYSIA</b></p> <p><b>Banks to include SMEs under full lockdown in loan moratorium, assistance offer</b></p>	<p>Association of Banks in Malaysia (ABM) expanded the Targeted Repayment Assistance (TRA) programme to include all SMEs that are not permitted to operate during the full-scale lockdown. All affected borrowers, including individuals and SMEs that wish to utilise the latest update of the TRA need to contact their banks to indicate which option they want to choose. The criteria includes those who have experienced a reduction in income, including household income, as well as B40 category borrowers registered under Bantuan Sara Hidup (BSH) and/or Bantuan Prihatin Rakyat (BPR). Microenterprises with loan facilities not exceeding RM150,000 may also opt for this specific repayment assistance. Under the latest TRA programme, any individual customers who have lost their employment are eligible upon contacting their banks for either a loan deferment (moratorium) for a period of three months, or a 50% reduction in the monthly instalment payment for a period of six months. ABM also advised microenterprises to request for assistance through AKPK's dedicated micro business helpdesk at <a href="http://www.akpk.org.my/microhelpdesk">www.akpk.org.my/microhelpdesk</a>, as it provides free financial advice and facilitates applications for repayment assistance.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: Malay Mail, 1 June 2021)</i></p>
<p><b>THAILAND</b></p> <p><b>Mall Group, banks to offer soft loan packages for SMEs</b></p>	<p>The Mall Group collaborated with six leading FIs and the Bank of Thailand (BoT) to design special soft loan packages for over 6,000 businesses, including SMEs to restore their business capacity and extend their business in the post-Covid-19 era. The partnership will help SMEs to receive faster soft loans to ease their cash flow management, lighten the burden of their expenses and preserve their employment which consequently would benefit the Thai economy. New SMEs also have the opportunity to access the soft loan. Under the collaboration, The Mall Group will be the bridge that coordinates and gathers all basic information from the entrepreneurs, shop owners, suppliers and SMEs who are interested in the soft loan, to give to the banks. BoT said corporate firms can support the data of their supply chain businesses, such as invoices, inventory, goods and service payment, and others to financial institutions. This will benefit banks' credit risk analysis of SMEs. SMEs also need to adjust their business model for survival. In particular, they need to standardise financial and accounting systems and digitalise business operations. This will help cut their operating costs and improve inventory management, income and profitability.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: Bangkok Post, 1 June 2021)</i></p>
<p><b>VIETNAM</b></p> <p><b>Project helps improve export capacity of women-led enterprises in Vietnam</b></p>	<p>A cooperation agreement was signed by the Vietnamese Ministry of Industry &amp; Trade's Trade Promotion Agency (VIETRADE) and the Trade Facilitation Office (TFO Canada), aiming to improve the export capacity of women-led enterprises in Vietnam during the 2021-2024 period. Women-led enterprises currently account for 25% of SMEs in Vietnam, contributing to generating a significant amount of jobs and stable incomes for workers. The signing of the cooperation agreement is within the framework of a project entitled 'Women in Trade for Inclusive &amp; Sustainable Growth' by TFO Canada and funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) in 24 developing nations, including Vietnam. Accordingly, during the 2021-2024 period, TFO Canada will coordinate with VIETRADE to assist Vietnamese trade promotion organisations and women-led SMEs in the fields of food processing and apparel accessories. This goal will be realised via intensive training courses on sustainable orientations regarding environment, gender equality, digital marketing and e-commerce, and trade promotion skills, etc. In addition, Vietnamese firms are expected to be invited to fairs and expos in promising markets, or to join online stalls at international expos.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: Nan Dhan, 1 June 2021)</i></p>