

EMPOWERING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

A Study of the Impact of Tupperware Brands in Indonesia



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About the Study

From February 2013 to August 2013, the Global Fairness Initiative (GFI), a Washington, DC-based non-governmental organization that works to promote more equitable, sustainable approaches to economic development, partnered with DEKA, an Indonesian survey firm, to explore how women's lives are affected through their work with Tupperware Brands. Using an established set of quantitative and qualitative tools—including focus groups, surveys, and field observations—GFI and DEKA collected and analyzed data on the lives and livelihoods of over 800 Indonesian women in the Tupperware sales force.

The following report outlines the inputs, systems, and practices that define Tupperware and that support the personal and professional transformation of its sales force. Statistical results of the study are accompanied by an analysis of how these findings answer one fundamental question: “How is a woman's life changed as a result of her work with Tupperware?” Qualitative data, including excerpts from personal stories, reveal the extent to which Tupperware's impact goes beyond the social, financial, and professional growth experienced by its saleswomen to affect their families and communities as well.

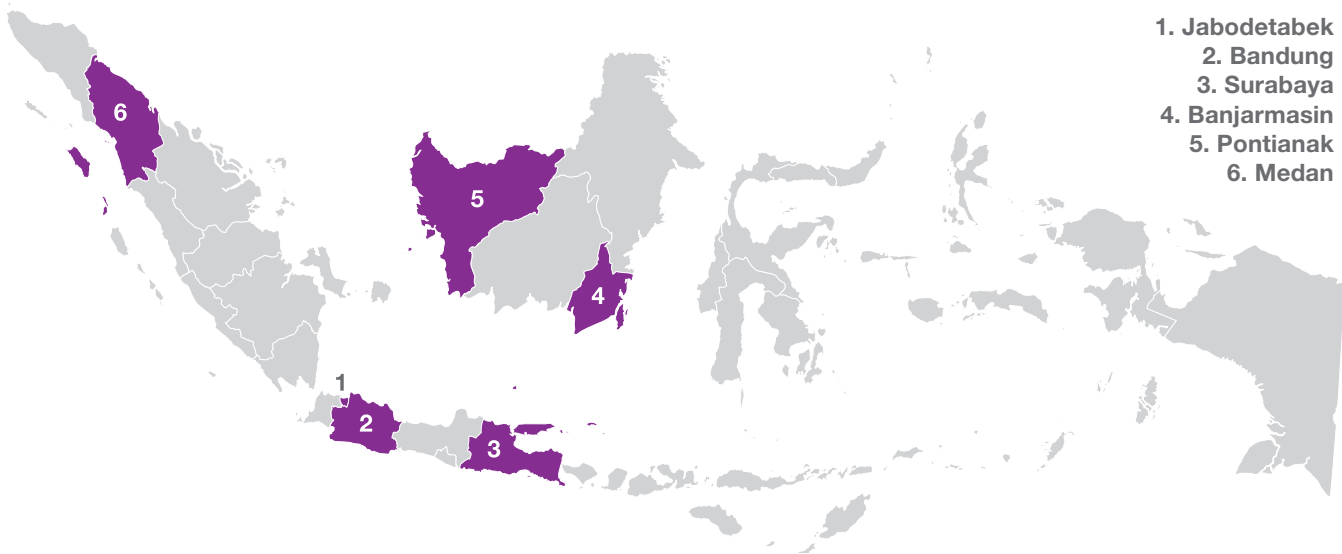
This study of Tupperware Indonesia's sales force is the second in a set of studies on the “Tupperware Effect,” the first of which was conducted in 2012 with 1,600 saleswomen of Tupperware and Fuller Cosmetics in Mexico. The 2012 study *“Empowering Women Entrepreneurs: A Study of the Impact of Tupperware Brands in Mexico”* serves as the foundation for the statistical and analytical approach used in this latest research.

Acknowledgment

This study would not have been possible without the support and assistance of Tupperware Brands Indonesia. Tupperware staff provided GFI and DEKA with direct access to its sales force through its assemblies, parties, and special events. GFI and DEKA would like to thank Tupperware and all the members of the Tupperware Indonesia sales force for sharing with us their knowledge and understanding of their company and of Tupperware's transformative role in their lives.

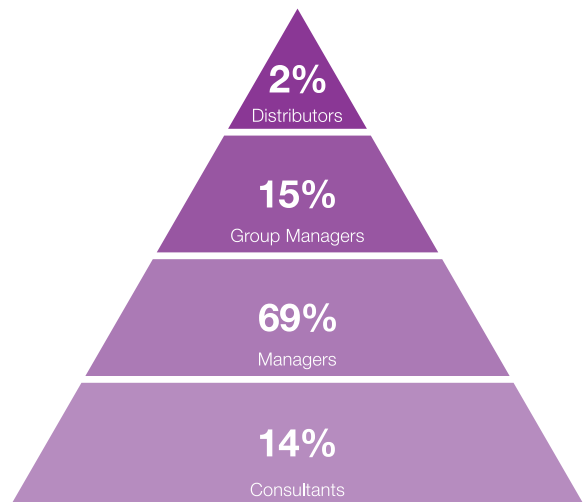
Methodology

GFI and DEKA researchers employed qualitative and quantitative methods to collect information from more than 800 women across Indonesia. All of the study’s participants have three or more years of experience with Tupperware and represent four different levels of the Tupperware sales force: Distributors, Group Managers, Managers, and Consultants. In the quantitative phase, GFI and DEKA researchers conducted 392 interviews in Jabodetabek, 81 in Surabaya, 97 in Medan,87 in Pontianak, 91 in Bandung, and 52 in Banjarmasin. These face-to-face interviews generally took place during Tupperware weekly meetings; however, some interviews were also conducted at respondents’ homes.



The qualitative phase consisted of a series of focus groups targeting each level of the sales force. The four focus groups, consisting of between 8 and 10 participants each, provided saleswomen with a safe and comfortable space to detail their personal stories and experiences with Tupperware. In addition, GFI and DEKA researchers observed Tupperware parties, assembly meetings, opportunity hours, and social programs. During these field visits, researchers conducted many informal interviews. Two formal interviews were also conducted with saleswomen in order to capture their full personal stories; these can be found at the end of the report.

Percentage of Sales Force Interviewed



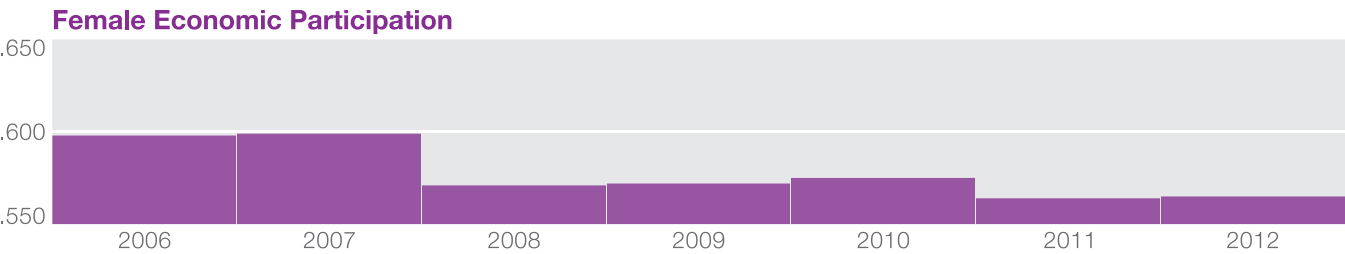
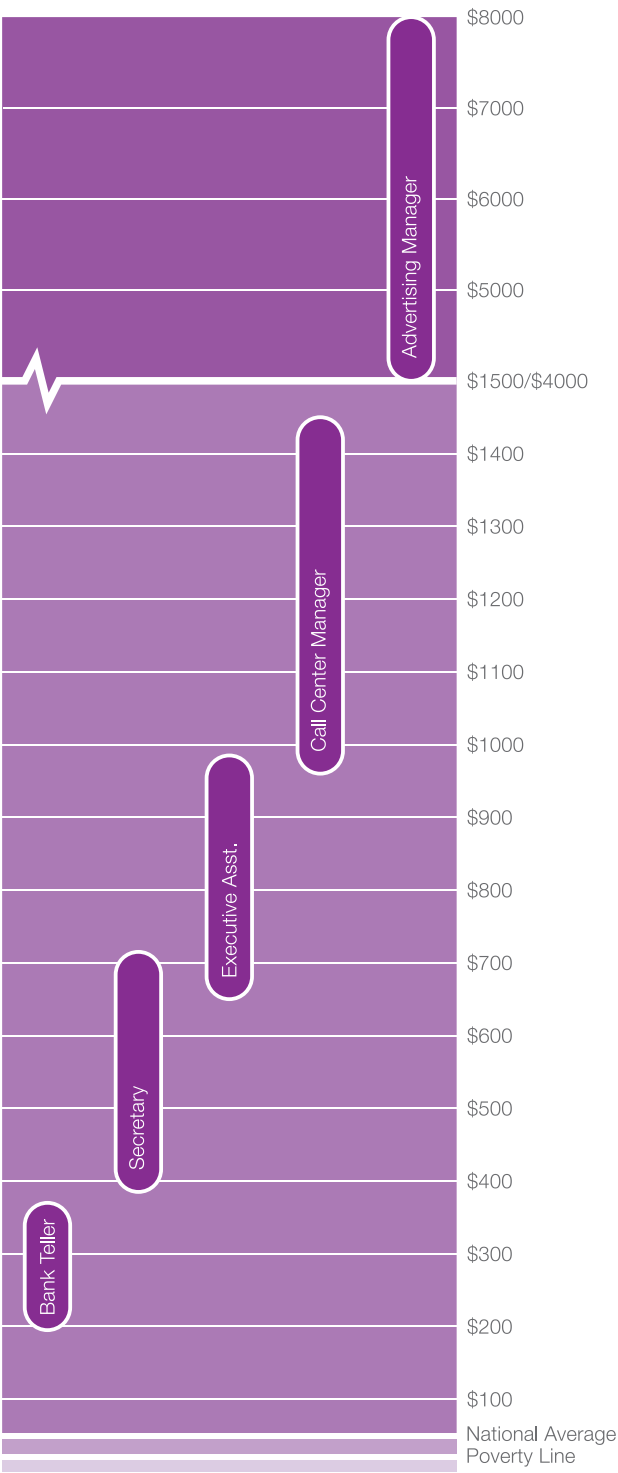
For this study, GFI adopted the same methodology used in the 2012 study of the Tupperware and Fuller sales forces in Mexico. Certain aspects of the study were tailored to a specifically Indonesian context, but the core methodology remained largely parallel—as did the approach to both data collection and analysis. While this report focuses on the results of the Indonesian study, the consistency in structure and methodology allow for comparison across as many data points as possible, with consideration to the underlying economic, social, and cultural differences between the two countries.

Note: Women who remain Consultants for three years do not represent the typical Tupperware Indonesia saleswoman; most achieve the next level after six months. To present a more accurate picture of the Tupperware experience, fewer Consultants were included in this study.

Context: Indonesia

Indonesia is currently the world’s 17th largest economy, the third most populous democracy, and home to the largest population of Muslims in the world. With a total of 245 million inhabitants, the country now also has the world’s fourth largest population¹. Although the nation has succeeded in achieving economic growth and reducing poverty, there remains a significant population of poor and vulnerable Indonesians. Statistics Indonesia (BPS) notes that, as of September 2012, 28.59 million Indonesians were living below the poverty line². This represents a sizeable decrease from the 37.17 million people living in poverty in 2007³. From 2000 to 2010 average real wages in Indonesia increased from \$44.35 (IDR 430,000) to \$55.20 (IDR 535,000) per month, a little more than double the poverty line⁴. Refer to the chart at the right for a comparison of average real wages in growing occupations in Indonesia with the poverty line⁵.

Despite the growth in Indonesia over the past few years, economic opportunity for women lags significantly behind that for men. In fact, women’s economic participation has decreased in recent years, as reflected in the steady decline in Indonesia’s ranking in the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report (dropping from 68th of 135 countries in 2006 to 97th in 2012⁶). While wages have gone up, as noted above, women earn nearly 23 percent less than men per month⁷. Only six women are employed for every ten men, and women are underrepresented in leadership positions⁸. Recently, women’s rights activists in Indonesia have argued that increased religious extremism has led to violence against women and limited the rights of women through religiously motivated morality laws⁹. All of these factors point to an environment that makes it increasingly difficult for women to achieve financial independence and success.



Direct Sales: Asia-Pacific

Recently observed global increases in direct sales are largely fueled by growth in the emerging economies of the Asia-Pacific region. The Asia-Pacific region is home to the majority of the world’s direct sales revenue, with 44 percent of direct sales occurring in the Asia-Pacific, compared to 40 percent in the Americas, 16 percent in Europe, and just one percent in Africa and the Middle East¹⁰. Along with a number of Asia-Pacific nations, Indonesia recently surpassed one billion U.S. dollars worth of direct sales in its economy, indicating the significance of the region to the direct sales industry.

Country	Volume (\$B)	Annual Growth
China	19.962	13.5%
Malaysia	14.415	7.0%
Taiwan	2.967	0.6%
Indonesia	1.088	11.0%
India	1.051	22.6%
Philippines	1.011	31.3%
Vietnam	.292	12.0%

Within the growing Indonesian market, Tupperware is the leader in direct sales¹¹. In 2012, Tupperware Indonesia generated over \$100,000,000 in sales. For five years in a row, Indonesia’s sales have increased over 30% in local currency. Such rapid growth reflects the appeal of direct sales to individuals—mostly women—seeking the chance to receive support from an existing organization that offers flexible hours and the prospect of learning business and management skills on the job. Moreover, in Indonesia—where personal relationships remain especially important in business—salespeople who often recruit friends and family into direct sales have fueled the rapid expansion of Tupperware’s direct sales workforce.

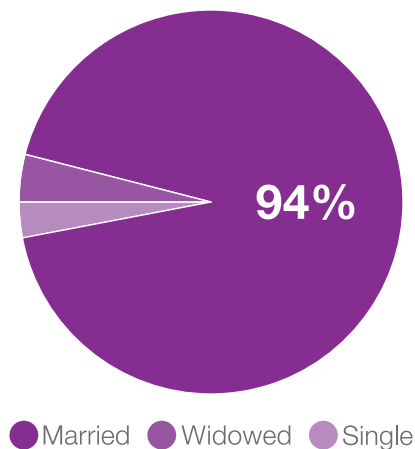
Profile of the Tupperware Woman

Tupperware women describe themselves as:

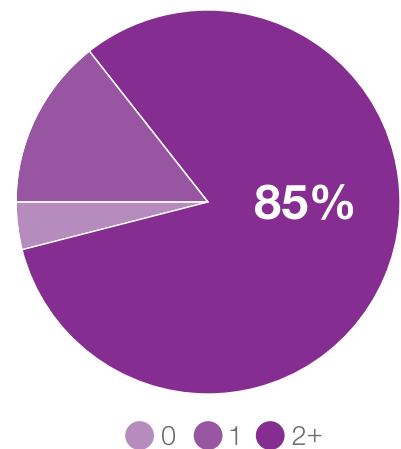
Happy **Independent** Useful
Motivated Leader Professional Proud **Enterprising**
Confident **Successful** Responsible

Tupperware's Indonesian sales force (nearly 200,000) is composed mostly of women between the ages of 31 and 50 years old. Ninety-eight percent of these women are married or widowed, and more than 80 percent have two to four children.

Marital Status

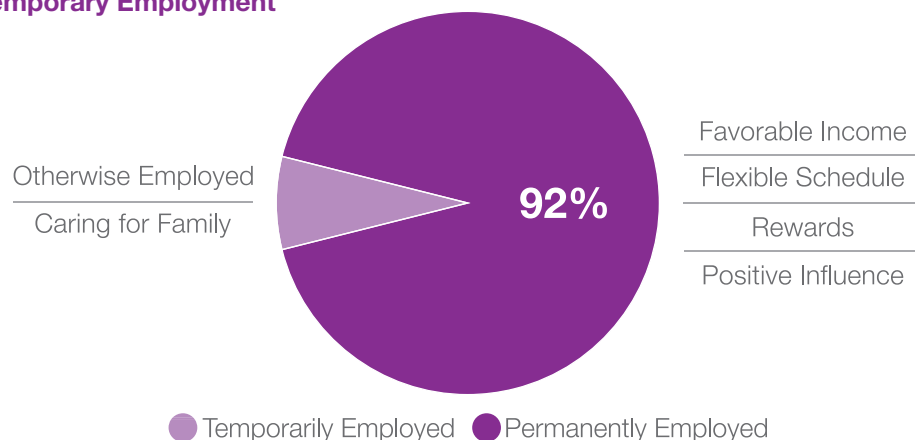


Number of Children



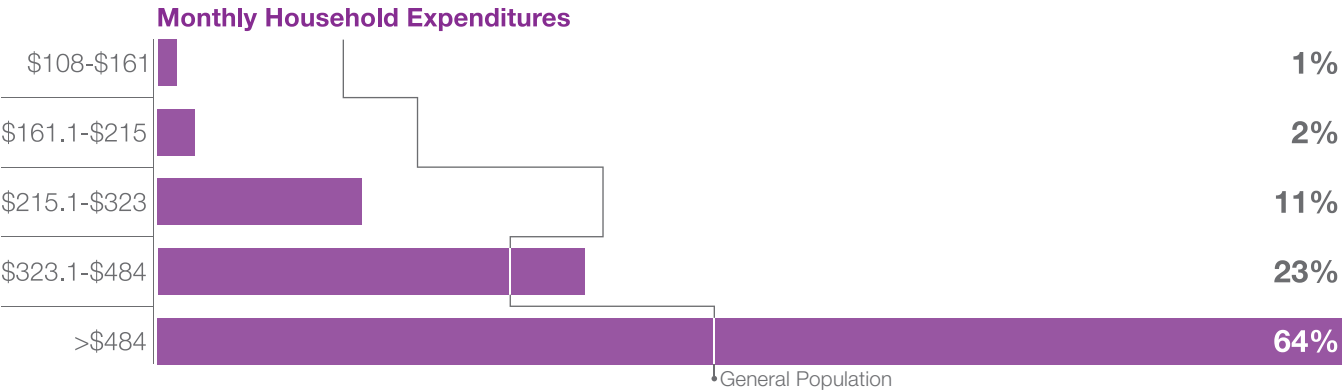
The majority of Tupperware saleswomen have no other employment and have been part of the Tupperware sales force for between 3 and 6 years. More than 90 percent of the saleswomen consider working with Tupperware as a permanent activity rather than simply a short-term job. The many different benefits they receive from working with Tupperware inspire their long-term commitment to the brand.

Permanent & Temporary Employment



Tupperware women tend to be more educated than the average Indonesian, with more than 50 percent having attended a university or academy, compared to only 14 percent of the general population. All of the sales force use cell phones, 76 percent own a computer, and 45 percent have a personal email address. Tupperware women also have much higher monthly expenditures than the general population. Sixty-four percent of Tupperware families have monthly expenditures that exceed \$485 compared to only 30 percent of average Indonesian households.

Tupperware families spend more because they earn more. Women are able to supplement the family finances with their Tupperware income, allowing their families to achieve greater purchasing power.

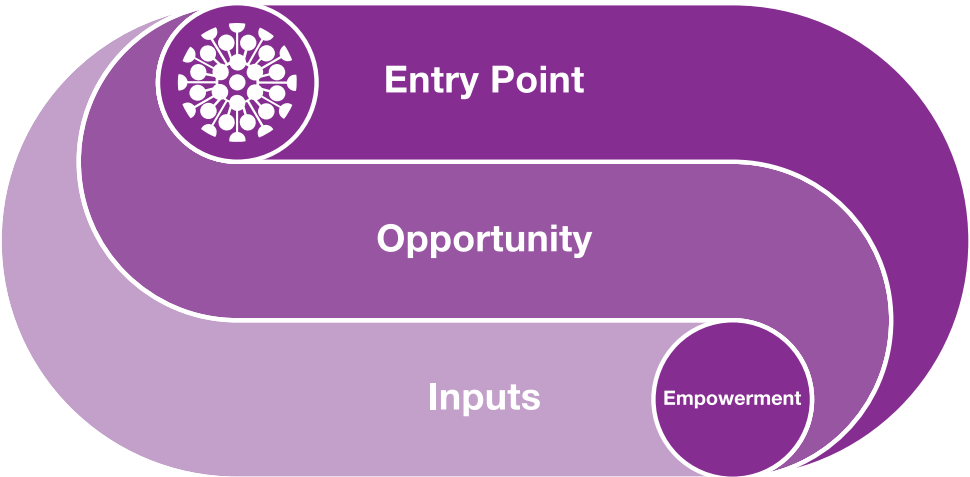


The Empowerment Process

Working with Tupperware allows women the opportunity to develop socially, professionally, and financially. Before joining Tupperware, women reported being shy, timid, and insecure. Coming largely from lower and middle-class families, many women were relegated to the domestic sphere. Responsible for household chores and childcare, they had little opportunity to socialize or develop.

“I was shy...just a regular housewife who took care of my family. Now I have become a different person who is confident and has dreams to pursue. I’m enthusiastic and positive thinking—a totally different person.” (Manager)

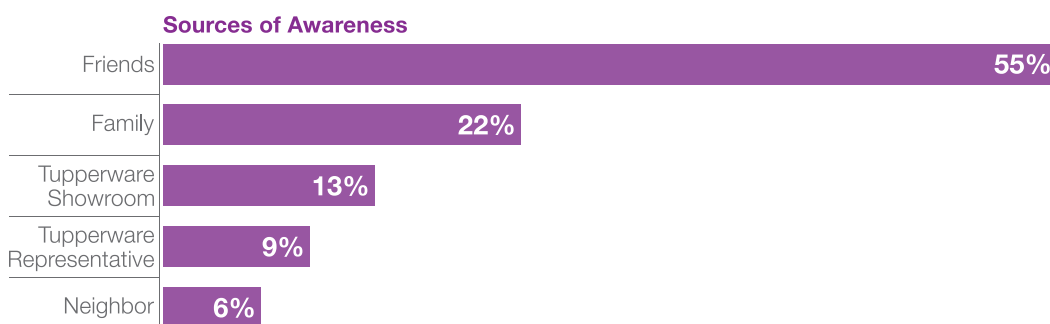
The opportunity and inputs that Tupperware provides support women’s transformation into proud, confident, independent, and determined entrepreneurs. This section will examine how the empowerment process takes place: why women join Tupperware; what keeps them productive; and ultimately how working with Tupperware changes their lives, families, and communities.



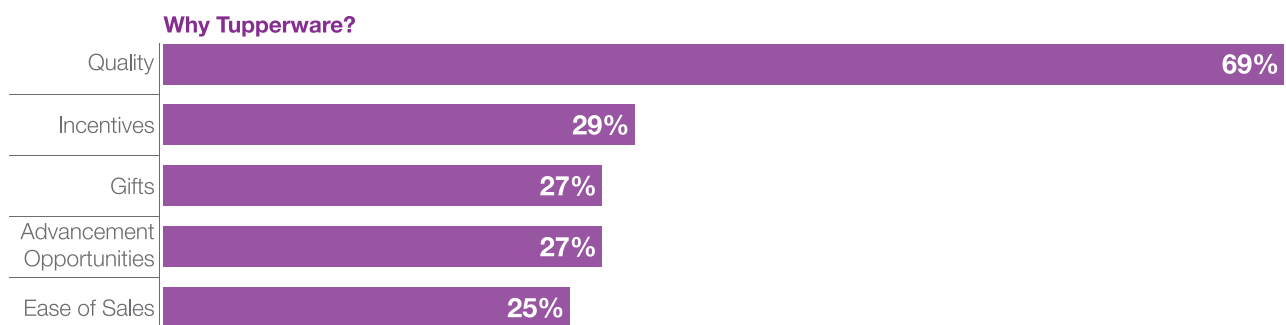
Entry point: Opportunity, Inputs, Empowerment

Entry point

Since most Tupperware women are married with children, they need the flexibility to juggle household obligations and children's activities with their work. They choose direct sales because it offers them that flexibility and the ability to earn their own income. Women choose Tupperware because of their love for the products and an awareness of the benefits that come with selling them. In addition, the vast majority of women are encouraged to join Tupperware by friends and family. Husbands tend to support their wives' work with Tupperware. Not only does the husband recognize the financial and social benefits but he also appreciates that his wife works within a community of women. In this somewhat conservative Muslim country, the fact that Tupperware provides a space where women can earn an income in a female-dominated environment is especially important.



***“My husband had an accident; since then I looked forward to finding a job...
Then I heard about Tupperware from my friends.” (Group Manager)***



***“The Tupperware system is better. They are transparent with
the rewards, gifts, and career paths.” (Manager)***

Opportunities

Working with Tupperware, women can earn for themselves and supplement their household income. The financial benefits of selling Tupperware can be transformational, moving families into new income brackets. Tupperware also provides women with an alternative space: branching out of the domestic sphere, women gain exposure to new experiences and build new social networks. These interactions, along with Tupperware trainings and opportunities to travel domestically and abroad, build women's social and professional capacity.

Inputs

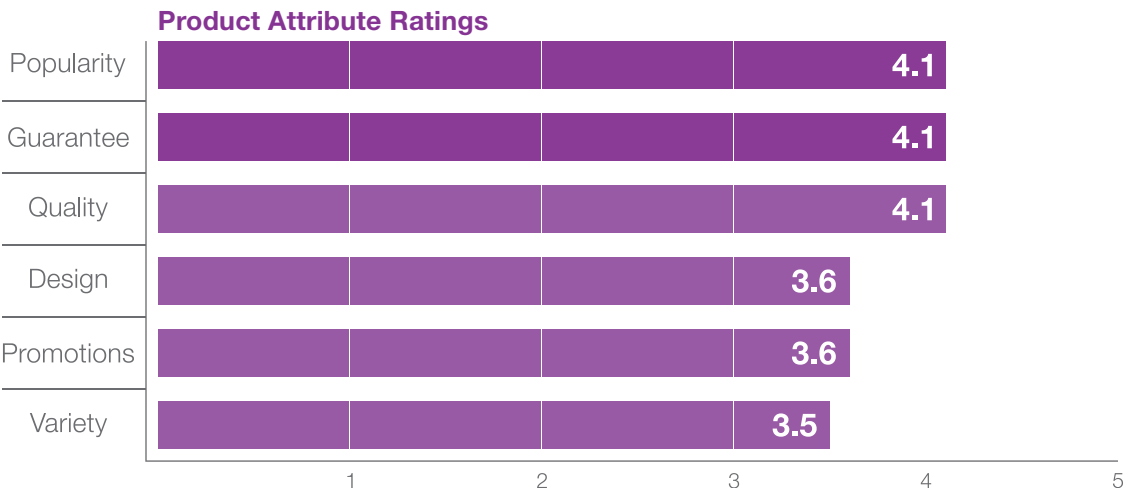
Many components of the Tupperware model work in coordination to build the confidence, pride, and leadership of its sales force. Not only do these inputs transform the woman but the effects also spiral outward, impacting her whole family and broader community.

Product: Quality, Popularity, Guarantee

“My friend (who is now already a GM) introduced me to Tupperware; Free Tupperware products made me come and join.” (Manager)

Tupperware products are the first step in building the Tupperware saleswoman’s self-confidence. Many Indonesian women are attracted to join the Tupperware sales force because of their love for the products, their confidence in the quality, and the prestige associated with the brand.

Having confidence in the product itself allows women to feel proud and secure when selling, particularly important for new saleswomen who may not yet feel confident in their own selling ability. The high quality and lifetime guarantee give saleswomen the assurance that their customers will be entirely satisfied with Tupperware products—both immediately and in the long run. Tupperware products enjoy great popularity and prestige as a trending item found in many Indonesian homes. Their cost and the fact that they cannot be purchased in stores lend Tupperware products an additional air of exclusivity. Families are more inclined to support and encourage a woman’s work with Tupperware since the products she receives as rewards benefit the entire household, unlike other direct sales items like cosmetics or jewelry.



Ultimately, the high quality, popularity, prestige, and lifetime guarantee associated with Tupperware products attract women to the sales force and allow them to enjoy feeling both secure and confident knowing that they are selling a product with high demand and high satisfaction for both the seller and the consumer.

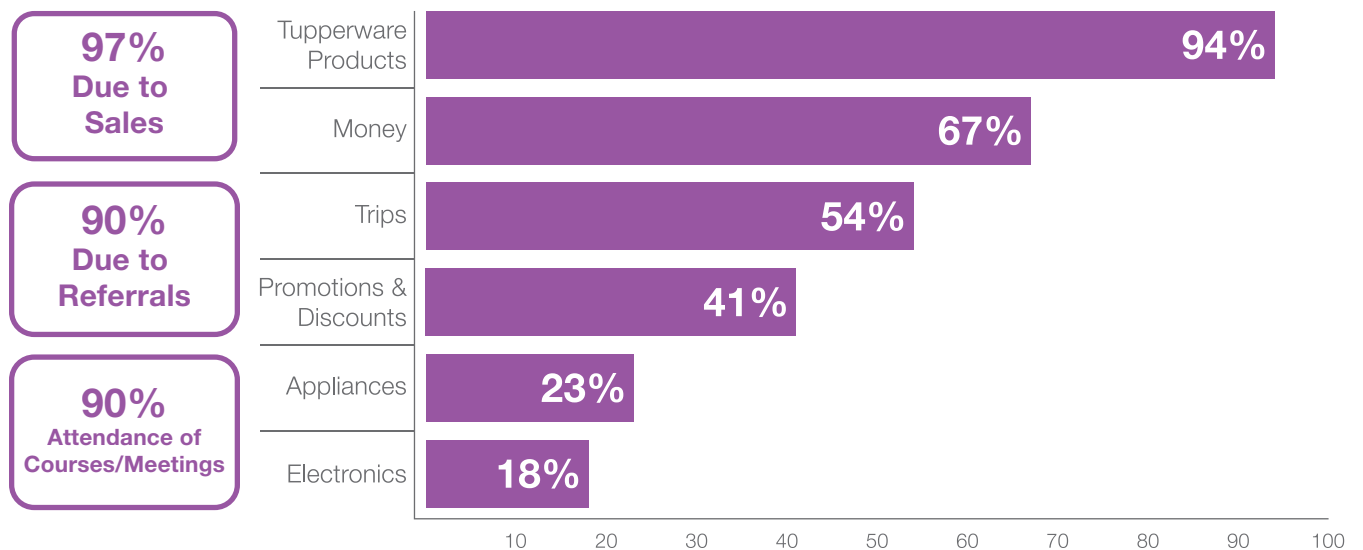
“Everybody knows Tupperware and its quality...Famous for years and used by many people. No other product offers a lifetime guarantee.” (Manager)

Recognition

“My neighbor has more respect for me since I went to Japan—I’m no longer perceived as a regular housewife but as a successful career woman.” (Manager)

Tangible and intangible recognition of achievements—along with the subsequent feelings of satisfaction and pride experienced by Tupperware saleswomen—is a major factor in the growth and success of the Tupperware Indonesia sales force. Every saleswoman reported receiving recognition in the years she has worked for Tupperware, and nearly every saleswoman interviewed (99 percent) feels that the Tupperware rewards program plays an important role in her commitment to Tupperware. More than a quarter of women interviewed identified the “huge” bonuses and rewards offered as their favorite aspect of working as Tupperware saleswomen. Women also identified vacations abroad (40 percent) and gifts (29 percent) when asked what other features of working for Tupperware they found most appealing.

Rewards Received



“It is an enormous experience that I went to Japan last month. It is totally a new thing for me to be in another country, to see the culture, shopping without any cost to me since everything was handled by Tupperware.” (Manager)

Overall, saleswomen agree on the rewards they appreciate most: 73 percent report a desire for financial rewards and 70 percent a desire for international trips as recognition of their achievements. International trips are especially popular with Tupperware saleswomen. Coming mainly from middle to lower socioeconomic levels, they see these trips as a new and exciting experience they could not afford on their own. These trips can also increase the status of the saleswoman among her peers, further bolstering her confidence.

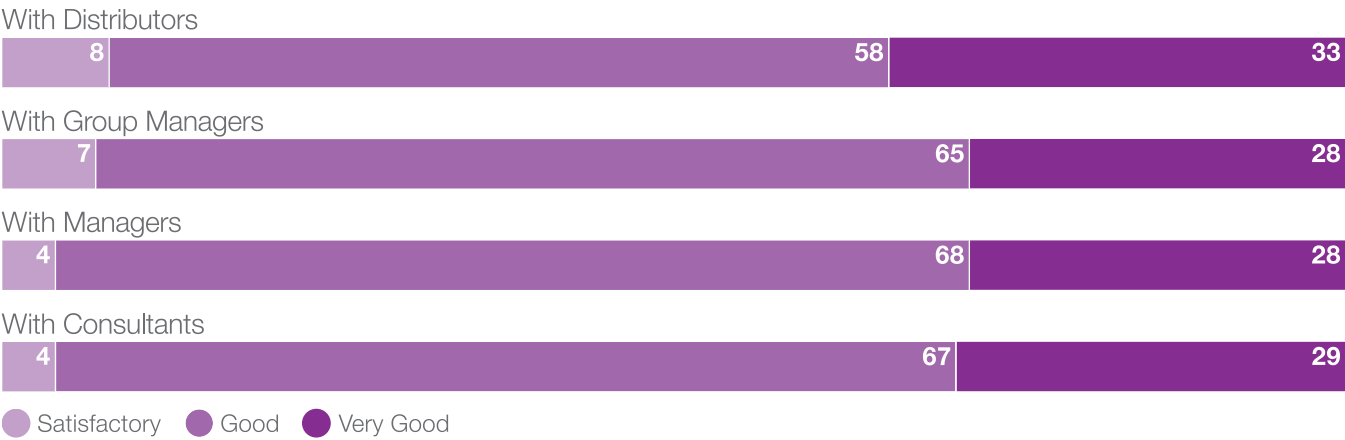
“I feel touched, respected—I already try my best to improve my position and today I finally achieved it.” (Manager)

The saleswomen also identified intangible rewards as an important part of the recognition program. These include the opportunity to be brought on stage and recognized at Tupperware weekly assembly meetings, as well as the ability to showcase achievements with plaques and certificates that can be placed in homes and Tupperware offices. Recognition and rewards serve as the symbol of their success and hard work and motivate the sales force to continue working toward Tupperware goals.

Internal Communication

“When the distributor sees my sad/tired face, she sometimes comes after me and asks me to her office. Inside, she listens to my problem and gives relevant solutions for it.” (Consultant)

Routine weekly meetings create ample opportunity for communication between all levels of the sales force. Assembly meetings, manager meetings, team captain meetings, opportunity hours, and trainings are all critical components of Tupperware’s success model and ensure that the sales force is clear and familiar with the scheme of work, as well as motivated and encouraged. The graph below demonstrates that Tupperware women utilize many different opportunities for communication: more than 90 percent of the sales force reported good and very good communication with their colleagues and superiors. Open channels of communication help make women feel like valued members of a team and, therefore, more empowered to succeed.



Sense of Community

“I prefer Tupperware since the kinship culture makes me feel comfortable. You can make friends and help others from different levels of the sales force and different teams.” (Consultant)

Witnessing a weekly assembly meeting, it becomes very clear that Tupperware is not just a job or a place to earn an income. One sees immediately that it is a community, a sisterhood, a family. The sales force sings together, claps together, holds hands, and prays together. The environment is upbeat, positive, and encouraging. Different levels of the sales force are recognized for their achievements by being brought on stage before the whole group. Managers and Distributors motivate saleswomen with new promotions and challenges.

An integral component of women’s social development comes from the opportunity to meet new people and develop new relationships. When asked how Tupperware has changed their lives, more than 75 percent of women noted that they have many more friendships. The wives and mothers who comprise the vast majority of the sales force highly value the opportunity to be social outside of the home. In addition to friendship, women also receive mentorship; saleswomen tend to look up to their distributors and often go to them for advice. Tupperware’s supportive and positive community is a remarkable achievement and a key input for the personal growth and development of the sales force.

“We support each other.... My husband is even close with my Group Manager’s husband.” (Manager)

Culture of Giving

Within the positive and supportive community that Tupperware has fostered, giving takes place on many levels. Women extend their encouragement, support, and compassion to each other. Distributors give away free Tupperware products, trips, and other gifts to recognize hard work and accomplishments. Saleswomen give away free products at Tupperware parties. Giving, whether in the form of support or a tangible gift, is a fundamental and defining component of the Tupperware culture.

The culture of giving permeates the Tupperware community and flows into the larger community. Almost 45 percent of saleswomen reported that Tupperware has changed their lives by “making [them] care more for others.” At Tupperware, caring for others is not a feeling but an action. Every level of the sales force reported giving back to society through support of foundations and charities. As incomes increase, Tupperware women are able and eager to put more of that income into their communities.

The culture of giving is reinforced through Tupperware’s social responsibility programs. In Indonesia Tupperware currently supports six social responsibility programs that do everything from providing free housing for homeless children to disaster relief and blood donations. These programs and the impact they have on the sales force will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

Transfer of Knowledge

“You know, you can’t describe it in words, the feeling that you are able to change other people’s lives into a better condition—it really makes me happy.” (Distributor)

Tupperware women are invested in their colleagues’ achievements, and the Tupperware model is structured so that it links everyone’s success together. With their own success depending largely on that of their subordinates, saleswomen have a built-in incentive to support one another. This model creates a cycle of support: as novice saleswomen move forward professionally and financially, they feel a strong desire to share this success and empowerment with others. Fifty-eight percent of the sales force interviewed said Tupperware has changed their lives by making them more grateful. Distributors, Group Managers, and Managers exhibit this gratitude through a strong sense of responsibility to help pull their subordinates up to the next professional level. Fifty-seven percent of women said that Tupperware has given them the opportunity to change other people’s lives for the better.

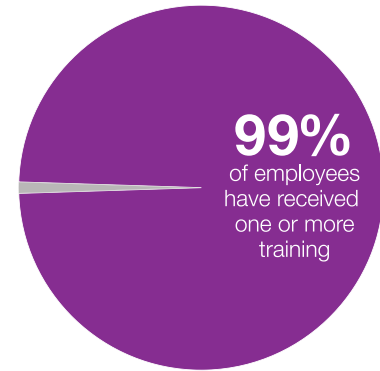
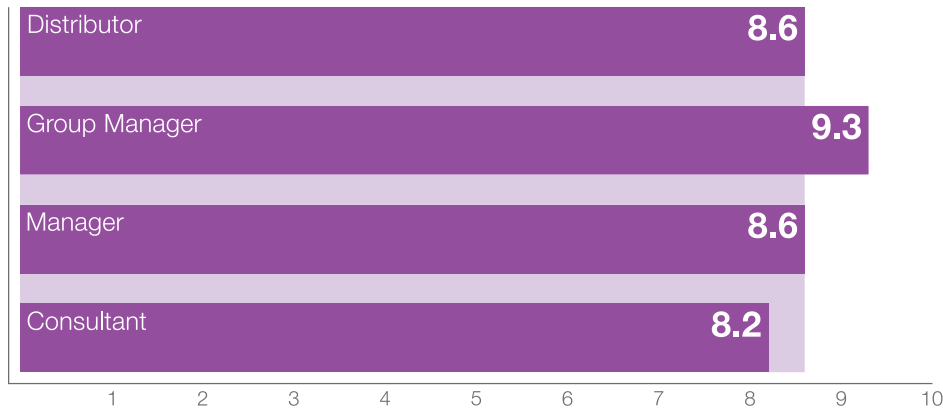
The most common way they achieve this is through an informal transfer of knowledge. Unlike formal, scheduled trainings, this knowledge transfer takes place daily and on an ad hoc basis. Women give their subordinates support and advice, and they pass along the tangible skills and knowledge to help them progress and develop into more professional and accomplished entrepreneurs. Tupperware women gain feelings of satisfaction, pride, and happiness from playing a role in the improvement of their colleagues’ socioeconomic status (e.g., increased income, being able to afford their own transportation, sending their kids to better schools, etc.).

This constant transfer of knowledge results in Indonesian women moving through the Tupperware ranks very quickly. It is normal for women in Tupperware Indonesia to go from Consultant to Manager in as little as six months. This rate of progression is impressive and affords women the opportunity to access even greater financial and professional resources in a short amount of time.

Trainings

The trainings Tupperware offers its sales force are key inputs in saleswomen’s professional and social development. Almost 100 percent of the sales force has received some kind of training. The satisfaction rate is high, with all four levels of the sales force giving the trainings a score of 8 or higher (out of 10). The trainings offered most often are on self-motivation, selling techniques, and hosting a successful Tupperware party. More than 50 percent of women have also received trainings in products, leadership, character development, financial management, and professionalism.

Evaluation of Training



“The communication training has taught me to talk with various kinds of people. I know how to communicate with different people now.” (Group Manager).

The trainings offered are practical and make a difference in women’s professional and personal lives.

- Time Management: Women reported that time management trainings allowed them to find a healthy balance between work and family obligations.
- Communication: Trainings on communication help women learn how to communicate confidently with different kinds of people, a necessary skill for a successful saleswoman. Women report that these trainings have also helped improve their communication at home with their families.
- Character development: These trainings teach women to remain calm and in control when facing stressful situations. This improves women’s management skills and can have a positive influence on their relationships with loved ones.

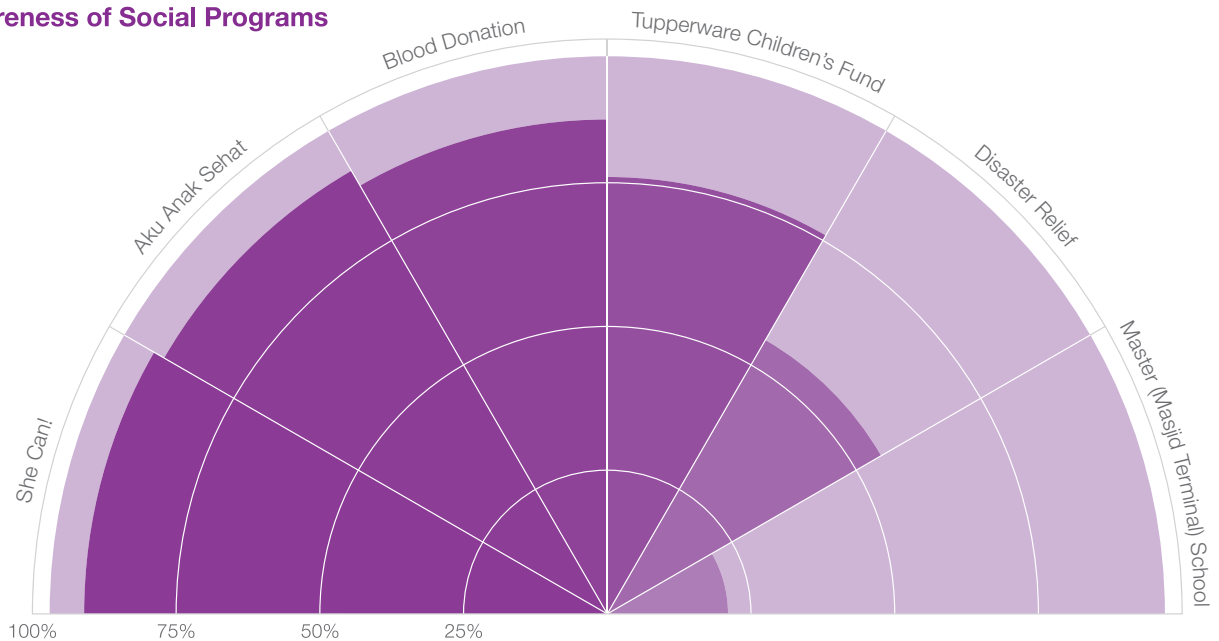
Saleswomen reported that after trainings they felt more motivated to work toward their goals and become Tupperware leaders.

Nearly half of the saleswoman indicated a desire for more training on selling techniques and on hosting successful Tupperware parties. Even though more than 90 percent of women have already received these trainings within their first month with Tupperware, the data indicates that refreshers and/or more extensive trainings on these topics may be beneficial.

Social Responsibility Programs

A defining characteristic of Tupperware Indonesia is the substantial investment it has made in social responsibility programs. There are currently six different social programs that range in size and focus, with an overall awareness rate of 97 percent among the sales force. Four of the programs have individual awareness rates of more than 75 percent. These numbers highlight how strongly Tupperware Indonesia has interwoven social responsibility into its corporate identity.

Awareness of Social Programs



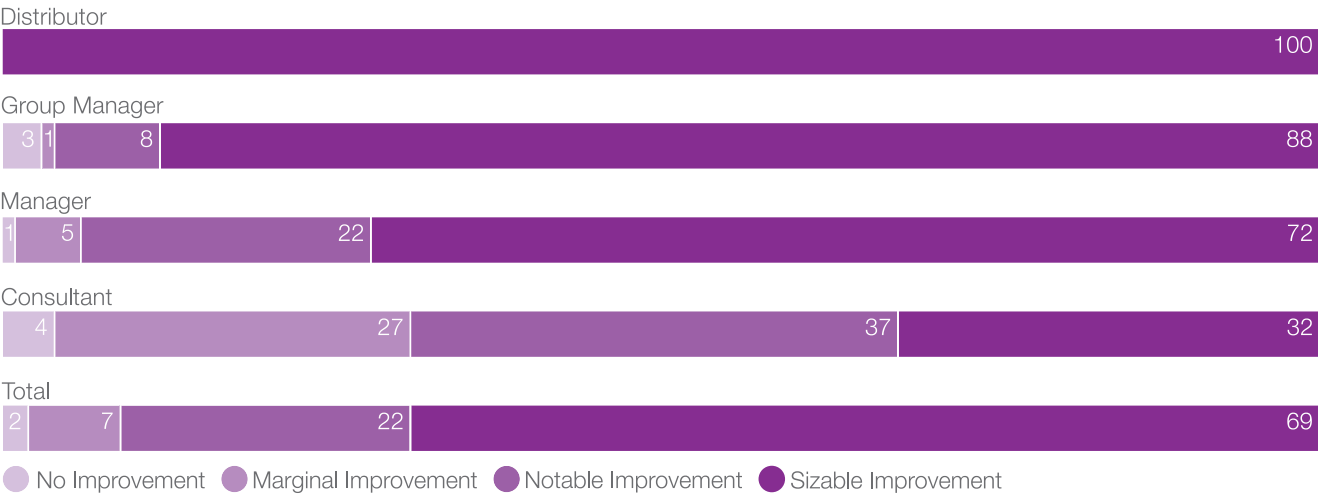
The programs address a range of social issues including but not limited to women's leadership, children's health and nutrition, housing and education for orphans, and disaster relief. The most famous program is the She Can! television show. Highlighting women leaders and the strides they are making in the community, the show is designed to enlighten, educate, and empower its viewers. On the air for five years now with approximately 300,000 viewers, She Can! is an important input in the effort to recognize and advance women's leadership roles in Indonesia. In addition to the television show, there are She Can! books, social media, and a yearly awards ceremony that honors women change makers. She Can! inspires the Tupperware sales force and other women viewers to rise to leadership positions in their own communities and carry on the Tupperware culture of giving.

Tupperware's social responsibility programs have had significant impact on its sales force. More than 82 percent of saleswomen interviewed reported that the programs have increased their empathy for others and made them more caring individuals. More than 50 percent also reported that the programs have broadened their perspectives and instilled a sense of common humanity. These social responsibility initiatives have contributed to the pride and satisfaction women feel as part of the Tupperware sales force.

Income

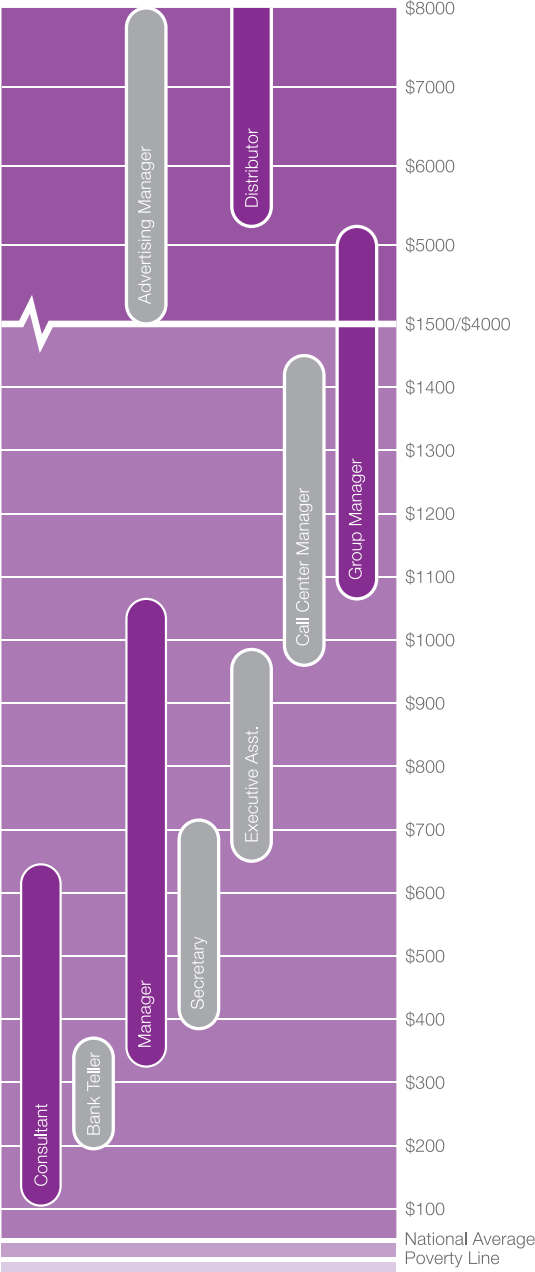
A majority of Tupperware saleswomen (69 percent) feel that their financial situation has improved significantly since they joined Tupperware; and this is especially true for Distributors (100 percent), Group Managers (88 percent), and Managers (72 percent). Around one third of Consultants feel their financial situation has improved substantially.

Change in Financial Situation



Tupperware allows women to achieve financial independence and contribute toward their families' expenses. More than 54 percent of women report that they are now better able to support their children's needs, and 47 percent report that they are now able to support their husband financially and supplement the household income. By the time women reach the Manager level they are already able for the first time to realize dreams of buying a house, car, or motorcycle and of making the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj).

For many women, the income they earn in Tupperware's part-time and flexible environment is as much as they would earn at some full-time jobs had they followed a more traditional career path.



Spheres of Impact

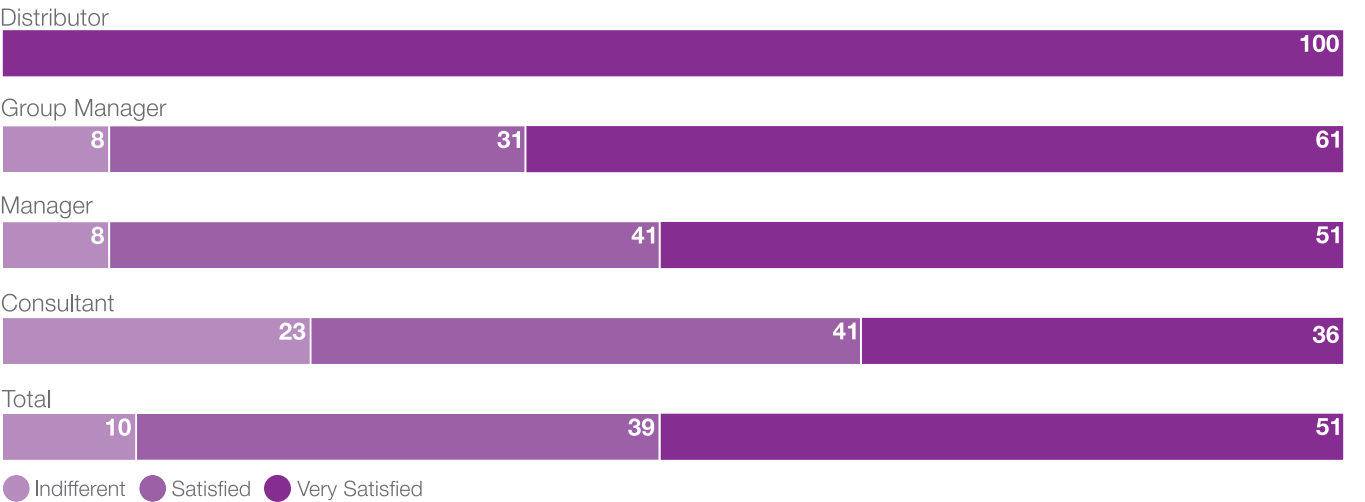
The Tupperware Woman

Tupperware’s inputs work to develop the woman holistically. By expanding her social skills and her social network, the Tupperware woman is able to grow professionally. Professional development in turn leads to continued financial improvement. Underlying the woman’s professional and financial success is her personal growth—the self-confidence, independence, and pride that Tupperware has fostered along the way.



Ninety percent of saleswomen are satisfied with their work with Tupperware, and that satisfaction increases as women move up in the ranks. Women reported that their satisfaction arises from the larger income, more opportunities to receive different types of training and self development, and more experience in changing other people’s lives as they motivate and become inspirations for others.

Satisfaction of Tupperware Employees



Indifferent Satisfied Very Satisfied

Social

Tupperware provides women with the space, encouragement, and training to develop new social networks and communicate with a wide range of people from varying socioeconomic backgrounds. The need to reach out to new customers pushes women to begin new activities and build new relationships within the community.

“I went from being shy to having full confidence when talking to other people.” (Manager)

Because the demand for Tupperware often comes from the middle and upper classes, saleswomen must learn to communicate and socialize with individuals from different socioeconomic backgrounds. The result is a dynamic and popular “Tupperware Mom” who has forged friendships with her Tupperware colleagues and clients and can interact confidently with all of them.

Tupperware saleswomen clearly recognize this transformation: 91 percent feel their social lives have changed positively because of working with Tupperware, 78 percent of respondents indicated that they now have many new friends and acquaintances, and 45 percent feel that they can better communicate with a variety of people.

Professional

“I have more energy to pursue my dream in Tupperware—I have a target and I have my own plan to achieve it.” (Manager)

From the outset saleswomen must adopt a professional and outgoing demeanor to meet Tupperware goals. During their first month with Tupperware, women receive trainings on product knowledge and on how to host Tupperware parties. These trainings, along with Tupperware weekly meetings, support the initial transition of women into the professional working environment. Subsequent trainings on time management, leadership, and other managerial skills provide saleswomen with a strong professional base, which is expanded upon throughout their career with Tupperware. Saleswomen find that after working with Tupperware they are better able to manage the duties of mother, housewife, and entrepreneur. Consequently, these women experience a conversion from housewives with few activities outside the home to career women with activities, goals, dreams, and plans to achieve them. Nearly half of the respondents noted that working with Tupperware helped them cultivate greater determination to achieve their goals (48 percent) and greater confidence in their ability to solve problems they encounter (42 percent).

“I can think calmly in most situations—I can give advice to my subordinates in terms of Tupperware business and also personal matters.” (Group Manager)

Women also develop a greater sense of self-awareness through working with Tupperware as they become more conscious of presenting themselves professionally in their dress and demeanor. Because Tupperware products are branded as healthy, clean, and stylish, women are encouraged to reflect this in their appearance. Tupperware saleswomen report gaining the confidence to wear different styles of clothing. Their new ability to determine the appropriate dress and demeanor for different situations builds their self-esteem and business confidence, propelling women forward professionally.

For a third of its saleswomen, work with Tupperware is considered a career, and their goals involve working their way up through the Tupperware ranks. Still others view selling Tupperware products as their own business (28%), reflecting the strong culture of entrepreneurship. The fact that two-thirds of saleswomen view Tupperware as a career or a personal business highlights the sense of ownership and commitment women feel for the company. Only a fifth of saleswomen see Tupperware as part-time work.

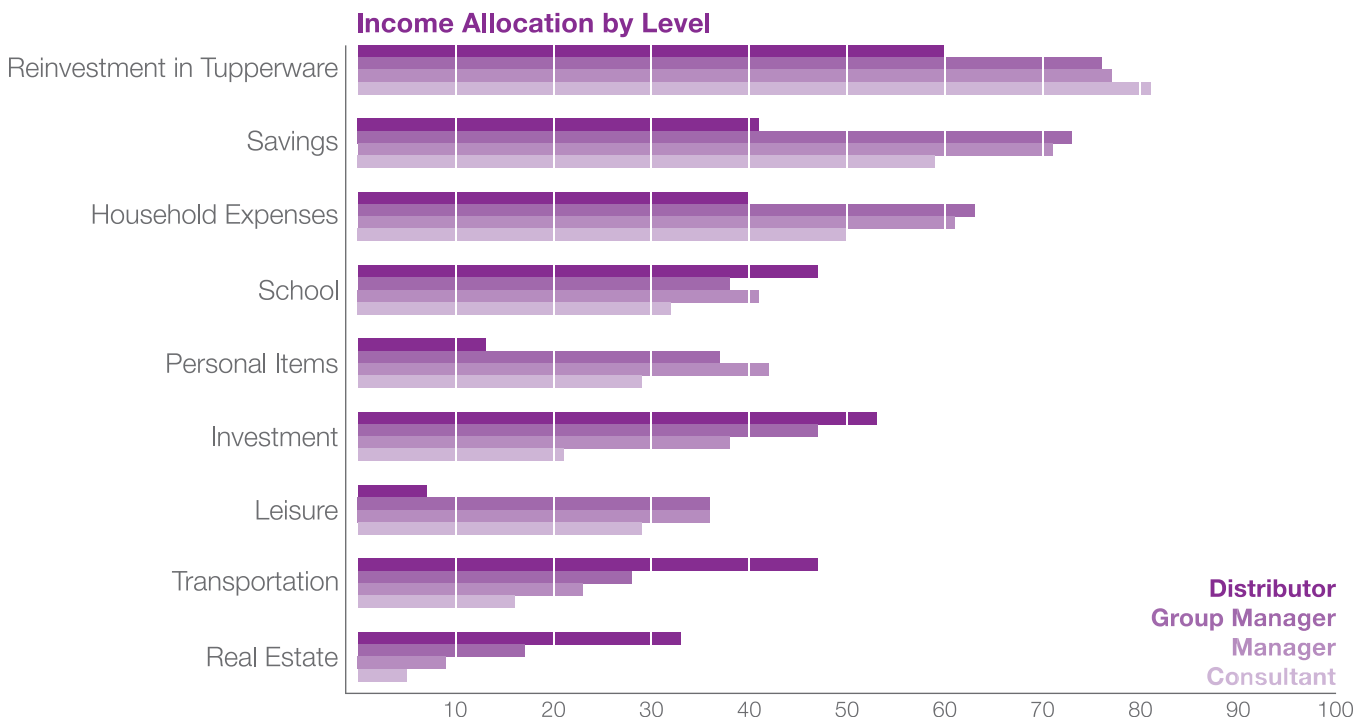
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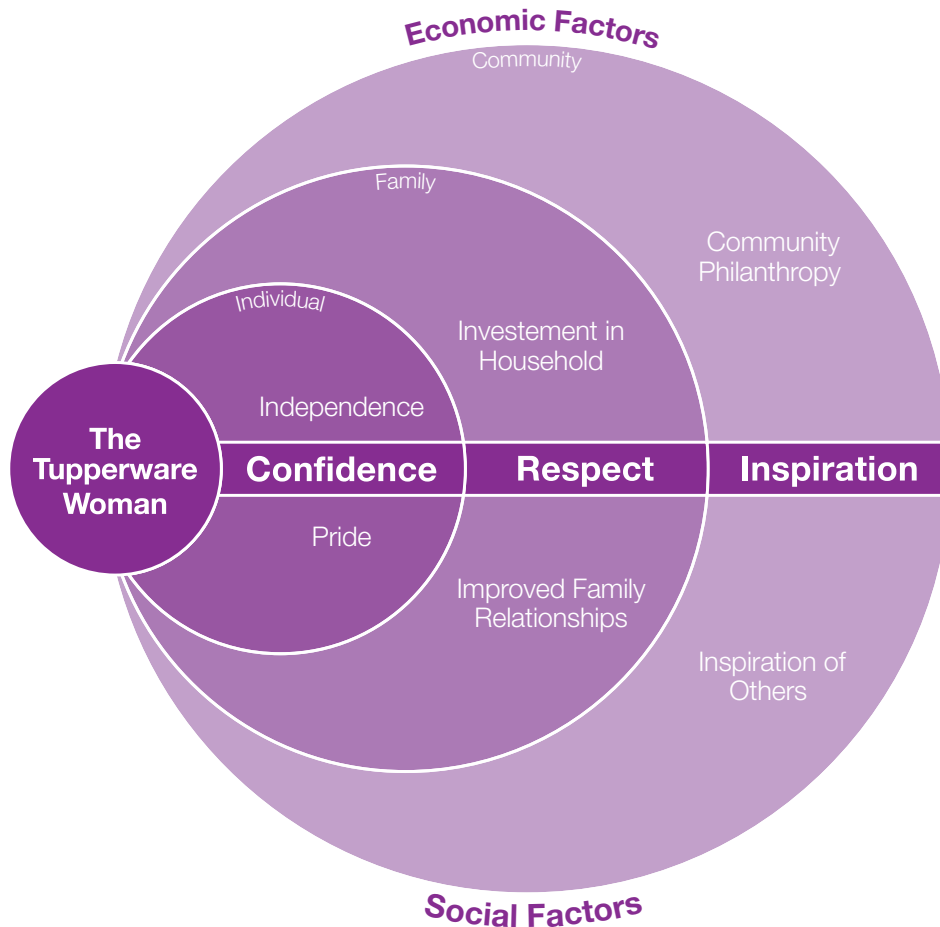
Now I feel more independent. I can buy my own needs and not depend [only] on my husband anymore. (Consultant)

Nearly all members of the Tupperware sales force (99 percent) feel that their lives have changed for the better after working with Tupperware for at least three years, and 97 percent of these women have felt a positive change in their financial situation. Women reported different types of financial change: the majority said that working with Tupperware has resulted in their obtaining a personal income (82 percent) while roughly half the respondents found that Tupperware incomes allowed them to help their husbands financially (47 percent), give their children what they want (54 percent), and meet personal needs without disrupting family finances (55 percent).

Tupperware saleswomen gain more, however, than just a supplementary income; they gain the respect and confidence associated with being a family breadwinner. Saleswomen report higher levels of appreciation and respect from their family because they contribute to the household income and provide a better living condition for all members of the family. Women gain confidence because working with Tupperware allows them to become financially independent, spending their own money how they choose.

When asked how they use their Tupperware income, the saleswomen provided a range of responses. A large majority (77 percent) reinvest in more Tupperware products. Tupperware earnings are also being used to better the saleswomen's and their families' lives: 70 percent save their earnings, more than half of the women (59 percent) spend their income on household needs, and just less than half spend their earnings on schooling for their children (39 percent) or on personal needs such as clothing and cosmetics (39 percent). These findings change slightly when broken down by Distributor, Group Manager, Manager, and Consultant.





The impact of the Tupperware woman's social, professional, and financial development grows from the personal to the family to the community level. As her confidence and abilities are strengthened through Tupperware inputs, she is able to thrive, making significant social and financial gains. The whole family feels the impact of these gains, earning the woman more respect and appreciation in the home. People outside the home also recognize the changes, and the Tupperware woman becomes a role model and inspirational figure as she contributes to her family and her community.

Self: Confidence

Independence, confidence, and self-esteem are nurtured through the many Tupperware inputs described above: the Tupperware product, recognition, rewards, community, positive communication, trainings, professionalism, and income. These inputs support the progression of the women from shy, timid, and insecure housewives to confident and proud entrepreneurs. Tupperware has empowered its women's sales force to believe in their potential and have dreams, goals, and plans for achieving them.

Family: Respect

My husband is proud of me since I can help him in fulfilling our family's needs. There is no more arguing about money, no more asking for money on payday as long as I can get home before him and take care of the children. (Consultant)

A large majority of respondents (71 percent) reported a change in their family dynamic as a result of working with Tupperware. Major factors contributing to relationship changes are new personal income, increased self-respect, and improved social skills. These factors cause immediate and long-term changes in the family. Soon after joining Tupperware, women no longer need to ask frequently for or quarrel over money. As families realize that Tupperware income can help meet the family's needs, they begin to

provide more support to saleswomen (nearly 80 percent of women noted more support since they began working for Tupperware). Nearly half of women also feel that they are more admired and appreciated in the home (45 percent) and have become role models for their children (49 percent).

Husbands support their wives' work with Tupperware when they recognize the financial and social benefits and the successful balance of the roles of mother, wife, and saleswoman (thanks to Tupperware's time management trainings). Saleswomen report that their husbands also appreciate some of the smaller things—like the wife's new awareness of her appearance and presentation. Children appreciate their mothers' increased ability to meet their needs and wants. As a result, women feel closer to both their children and husbands.

By the time Tupperware women reach the Manager level they've achieved greater equality with their husbands as decision makers and breadwinners in the home. Husbands begin to support their wives in domestic chores and childcare, allowing typical gender roles to become less restrictive. Family relationships are also impacted by the communication and leadership trainings women receive as Tupperware managers. Women become mediators, problem solvers, and motivators in the family. Children look up to their confident mothers, who consistently encourage learning and success. In addition, as Tupperware women improve their confidence and communication skills, they feel better able to share their feelings and aspirations and report deeper relationships with their husbands.

Although some Distributors and Group Managers reported negative changes in their family dynamic—the most significant being a feeling of distance caused by lack of time—the vast majority of Tupperware women experience a new level of respect, admiration, and appreciation from their families. The economic contributions, as well as the confidence and pride that Tupperware has cultivated in its sales force, promote happier, healthier families.

Community: Inspiration

My husband told me that our neighbor asked his wife “why don’t you follow her as a Tupperware saleswoman? She has her own personal income and is able to help her husband.” (Manager)

Tupperware saleswomen are held in high regard by members of their community. Their affiliation with a prestigious company, their ability to contribute to the financial well being of their families, trips abroad, and a perpetuation of the Tupperware culture of giving through support of charities, are recognized and admired by the community. At the earliest stage, Tupperware saleswomen are appreciated because they are able to help fulfill the needs of their families. When women begin earning higher incomes, their investments in their households increase. After three years of working with Tupperware, many women reported being able to afford things like new motorcycles, cars, household renovations, and better education for their children. These advancements do not go unnoticed by neighbors and friends. Perhaps most admirable is the Tupperware woman's level of support for charities and foundations. The more income Tupperware women earn, the more they give to others in need.

Tupperware saleswomen are admired not just for their material contributions to the family and community. Members of the community recognize and appreciate the changes apparent in Tupperware saleswomen, seeing their transformation into self-confident, sociable, and successful entrepreneurs who can maintain good relationships with many different members of the community. As Tupperware women encourage others to improve their own lives, they become role models and inspiring figures for other women in the community. Not only have they transformed their own lives, their homes, and the lives of those around them, Tupperware women are eager to give back and to motivate others to find success.

Areas of Opportunity

The inputs Tupperware provides to its sales force are transformative. Nearly all participants in the study—a remarkable 99 percent—reported positive changes in their lives as a result of working with Tupperware. Throughout the study saleswomen voiced recommendations, and GFI and DEKA researchers observed areas in which Tupperware could strengthen inputs to further empower its saleswomen. The opportunities identified here center on the areas where women already find the most satisfaction in working with Tupperware: their ability to earn a larger income (affected by how well they can sell products and earn rewards), the opportunity to receive trainings and develop themselves, and the ability to change other people's lives by motivating and inspiring them.

For most of the sales force, the decision to work with Tupperware began with a strong appreciation for its products. The quality and popularity of the products give novice saleswomen a sense of security as they develop confidence in their own sales skills and reinforce the strength of the Tupperware brand. During the study saleswomen reported that products are often out of stock, slowing the warranty process, and that orders sometimes don't arrive on time or in full. Considering the paramount role that the Tupperware product plays in the initial confidence dynamic, improvement in availability and consistent delivery of the product will reinforce confidence among the sales force, and strengthen their credibility with their clients.

The problem is the availability of the products, especially for the new popular items that are in high demand by most of the sales force. We've ordered it, yet the product is not ready to distribute. Sometimes I buy products for myself and stock them in my house to overcome this problem.” (Manager)

Providing quality products plays a significant role in the saleswoman's success, and an important and visible part of that success are the gifts and rewards she receives. These rewards are a signature aspect of the Tupperware model and create feelings of accomplishment and improve motivation among the sales force. International trips are highly popular with saleswomen and 70 percent of the sales force emphasize the value of this award (financial rewards are only slightly more popular, with 73 percent of saleswomen giving them as their top choice). Only 54 percent of have received a trip as a reward, indicating that Tupperware can build on this strong incentive.

Although the norm at Tupperware is for women to move up quickly through the ranks, there are saleswomen who remain Consultants for several years. These long-term Consultants—who continue at the same level because of childbirth, relocation, involvement in other activities and businesses, difficulties in recruiting new members, or lack of extra money for capital (because their customers are paying in installments)—tend to feel less satisfied with their work than their colleagues. They report feeling stuck as they watch their peers develop professionally, make more income, and receive more trainings at the Manager and Group Manager level. In addition, many of these women do not hold regular Tupperware parties and have a low awareness of the benefits of such parties. Providing recurring and refresher trainings would reinforce Tupperware's support, strengthen these saleswomen's professional and personal development, and increase their business.

Nearly half of all Tupperware Indonesia saleswomen at all levels report they would like additional trainings. Over 90 percent of women receive—and are highly satisfied with—workshops in their first months with Tupperware on selling techniques and hosting successful Tupperware parties; however, many desire review and/or more extensive instruction. As women reported feeling more motivated after trainings to work toward their own goals and to become Tupperware leaders, Tupperware could consider offering refresher courses or multiple levels of trainings on increasing sales, holding successful Tupperware parties, and financial management (reinvesting, saving, et cetera)

Social responsibility programs are a defining characteristic of Tupperware Indonesia and have a positive impact on the sales force. While over 80 percent of saleswomen reported that these programs have affected them on a personal level—increasing their empathy and making them more caring individuals—fewer than half felt it increased their pride in Tupperware. The percentage of women feeling a sense of pride rises, however, with their level in the sales force, perhaps reflecting a greater connection and sense of ownership from these higher-level women to Tupperware's community initiatives. Regularly involving all levels of the sales force in the social responsibility programs—whether through more prominent mention at weekly meetings or more regular volunteer outings—could increase the level of pride saleswomen take in these programs and in their own ability to impact the lives of others.

Personal Transformation Stories

Upi's Story



In recent years, Indonesia's economy has grown steadily at above five percent per year and so has the size of the country's middle class. In the capital city of Jakarta, owning a motorcycle is no longer a luxury. With a down payment of 50 US dollars, one can enjoy a brand new ride and pay off the rest in up to 48 months. Now the burgeoning city is populated not only with its inhabitants but also with motorcycles.

Just a few miles outside Jakarta, Upi Herawati, 39, achieved a thin slice of the nation's robust economic growth two years ago: she bought a motorcycle. One stormy night, Upi and her seven-year-old son, Zidan, rode home in the rain after delivering orders of Tupperware products door to door. She remembers her son saying, "If only we had a car, you wouldn't have to carry all these things and you could stay dry." Two years later Zidan's wish came true. Now his mother can easily transport products to support her business.

"Every woman has the potential to grow"

Four years ago Upi started thinking of ways to control her family's household spending as they were living paycheck to paycheck. Her husband, an elementary school teacher, supported her enthusiasm. She immediately thought about joining Tupperware just to get the discounted food containers. It was then that she met a woman who was once in her shoes but had become a Tupperware sales force Group Manager. "She inspired me to believe that every woman has the potential to grow," said Upi. In Indonesia, like many other patriarchal societies, the majority of women are still expected to dedicate most of their lives solely to being wives and mothers—often from a very young age. "They feel powerless to do other things," she noted. Upi is one of the game changers. She's only a high school graduate but has transformed herself, her family, and her society. Upi admits that she became more confident and disciplined since learning and practicing Tupperware's signature direct-selling strategy. "Now I know how to develop myself and how to be a good leader for the 30 ladies in my sales force network," she said. Thanks to her hard work and self discovery, she's now the proud owner of a car and a house. Her success did not come easily. There was a time when she lost significant numbers of her sales force, causing a dramatic drop in her unit sales. From that experience she learned not to be complacent. She worked even harder to expand her network and scout new talents.

"One day I invited a friend to join my business because I knew she was eager to help her kids excel in Math and English but couldn't afford it," she explained. "Now my friend is able to finance extracurricular lessons in both subjects for her two kids."

Upi believes that women play an important role in transforming lives. As an observant Muslim, she endeavors to fulfill the Islamic teaching that encourages sympathy for orphans. Unable to provide assistance in the past, she now regularly sets aside part of her Tupperware earnings to support an orphanage.

Upi has become a role model in her community and has no problem facing obstacles ever since that rainy evening ride with her son. She feels confident that she can weather other storms.

Rosa's Story



“When you educate a woman, you educate a generation.” We often take this idea for granted. For Rosa Amelia, a mother of two young sons, women are endlessly influential as the first and foremost role model for their children. “The quality of a family and the future generation is determined by the exemplary lives of the women in the family,” she says.

Beginning with a simple goal to have extra savings for a rainy day, Rosa joined Tupperware. At first she was only helping out her friend to sell a set of Tupperware products. “After seeing the business prospects and career opportunities Tupperware has to offer, I decided to be more focused,” she says. Rosa had tried a variety of multi-level marketing and direct selling businesses but saw more realistic opportunities in Tupperware.

“I proved that I can realize my dream”

In her view, there are many external factors limiting women’s ability to improve their livelihoods. But Rosa often finds that the biggest obstacle comes from within—finding the will and effort to get up and make a change.

Indonesia’s population and economy have grown rapidly in recent years, but women’s economic participation has decreased. A report from the International Finance Cooperation added that in Indonesia the number of women in higher-level positions is still well below 10 percent. On the other hand, recent research shows that companies with more women at the top perform better.

Four years ago Rosa first expressed her intention to focus on Tupperware and make it a career. “At first, I did not immediately get the support from my husband,” she explains. Her husband, a private-sector employee, told her, “These are expensive everyday items; nobody is going to buy them from you. It’s going to be hard for you to convince people that these are of good quality.” Over time, however, Rosa’s efforts gained her husband’s support—he encouraged her to pursue her dream to becoming a business-woman.

For Rosa, her hard work has paid off. Financially, she can save more for the family with the income she earns through Tupperware. She also notes her social development, saying, “I’ve met incredible women through Tupperware. My social network is greatly expanded now, not to mention my horizons.” The opportunity to attend Tupperware trainings and the chance to travel have enabled her professional development and given her the means to share her good fortune with others. “Besides the personal and social benefits, I’m now also spiritually fulfilled. I can help the poor through my church,” says Rosa.

Although Rosa enjoys the many perks of working with Tupperware, the shift from ordinary housewife to career woman is what she considers most rewarding. She hopes to inspire her children and other woman to pursue and achieve their dreams. “I proved that I can realize my dream with Tupperware; so can others.”

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