

## PART 1: Overview of the Bridge Women

### ○ List of the Bridge Women

The three colors in the table below represent the business growth stage of each company (blue: start-up period; orange: business establishment period; yellow: business development period) which was declared by the women entrepreneurs themselves. Numbering is done corresponding to the number in the upper left corner of each page on the profile of the Bridge Women.

No.	Name (Titles omitted)	Type of business	Country she mainly operates	Page
1	Asuka Hatta	Retail (Food and Processed Food)	India	7
2	Eriko Kikuchi	Service (Staffing)	Japan, Asia	7
3	Yoka Onuma	Service (Advertisement)	Indonesia	7
4	Ayaka Yamashita	Manufacturing and Service (Design)	Japan, Philippines, Myanmar	8
5	Norimah HJ. Ahmad	Service (Massage)	Malaysia	8
6	Akiko Nishio	Service (Japanese Language School)	Malaysia	8
7	Siong Wee Li	Service (Guest House)	Japan	9
8	Ayane Shiraki	Service (Music School)	China	9
9	Makiko Noshi	Manufacturing (Beverage)	China	9
10	SungUn Chang	Manufacturing and Sales (Solar Related Products)	Japan, South Korea, USA	10
11	Jung Hwa Lee	Manufacturing and Sales (Clothing)	South Korea, China, Viet Nam	10
12	Gita Wolf	Publishing	Japan, India, South Korea, Europe, U.K., Australia, etc.	10
13	Hanna Keraf	Manufacturing and Sales (Textile product)	Indonesia	11
14	Lyn Lee	Retail and Service (Confectionery, Café and Restaurant)	Singapore, China	11
15	Megumi Florence	Retail (Herbal Tea) and Service (Consulting)	Singapore, Japan	11
16	Lee Meiling	Retail (Gallery Shop)	Singapore, Japan	12
17	Passawee Tapasanan Kodaka	Manufacturing and Sales (Clothing)	Thailand	12

18	Miyuki Shimada	Manufacturing and Sales (Bed Linen)	Thailand, Japan	12
19	Geraldine S. Batoon	Service (Business Consulting)	Japan, Philippines	13
20	Midori Ogino	Import, Wholesale and Retail (Food)	Japan, China, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, USA	13
21	Teiba Nirmala Junko	Service (Business Consulting)	Japan, India	13
22	Tomiko Fukushima	Manufacturing and Service (Food)	Japan	14
23	Mineko Hasegawa	Import and Sales (Clothing)	Japan	14
24	Sun Xiaowei	Wholesale (Building Materials and Machinery)	Japan, China	14
25	Kaoru Joho	Service (Information)	Japan	15
26	Maki Yamada	Import and Sales (Food, etc.)	Japan, Philippines	15
27	Rin Arikawa	Sales and Service (Planning)	Japan, India	15

○ Countries where the Bridge Women are active



## ○ Profiles of the Bridge Women

### Profile No. 1

#### **Asuka Hatta, Co-Founder**

Hasora Organic India Pvt. Ltd., India  
Retail (Food and Processed Food)



Asuka, together with her twin sister Mai, founded an organic food delivery service in Gurgaon in 2016. After moving to India, Asuka had a hard time purchasing fresh vegetables. She also learned that there were many expatriates and Indians who wanted to buy safe and healthy food. Mai, who had worked for an Indian NGO, knew that farmers had limited options for selling their products. The twins saw a business opportunity and decided to bridge the gap between farmers and end-consumers by bringing transparency to the supply chain. Their motto is “Eating can take your life to a better place!” They are delivering healthy, safe, and tasty food to customers’ dining tables while also improving the status of rural farmers.

### Profile No. 2

#### **Eriko Kikuchi, CEO**

Tiger Mov, Inc., Japan  
Service (Staffing)



Eriko, founder and CEO of Tiger Mov Inc., creates thousands of young leaders through intensive internship programs in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Her journey started when she launched an internship project at the company she had joined after graduating from university. After sending 600 interns to various countries, she decided to start her own business in 2016. Since then, Tiger Mov Inc. has grown rapidly and now covers 35 countries. Eriko continues to build up a community of next-generation leaders and aims to make the company a global leader in alternative education.

### Profile No. 3

#### **Yoka Onuma, President Director**

PT. Rentracks Cocreation Indonesia, Indonesia  
Service (Advertisement)



Yoka moved to Indonesia in 2015 to serve as a local representative of Rentracks Co., Ltd. She met more than 300 people while seeking a business opportunity in e-commerce in the field of traditional arts. She revitalized the batik fashion business by creating a semi-order-made system and a platform for buyers, designers, and consumers. She established PT. Rentracks Cocreation Indonesia in 2017 and organized several events such as batik fashion competitions. She used the power of influencers to popularize batik among younger consumers. As a young entrepreneur, she has overcome many challenges while working in a culture different from her own.

**Profile No. 4****Ayaka Yamashita, Member of Board and Director**

EDAYA Research Cordillera Inc., Philippines  
Manufacturing and Service (Design)



Ayaka graduated from the University of Tokyo and volunteered to work with an NGO in a village in the Philippines in 2010. In 2012, Ayaka co-founded the design firm EDAYA, a bamboo-based design/art project in the Asian region for accelerating social innovation, including the rediscovery of local traditions in the global context. EDAYA has also been developing an educational module for multicultural bamboo art called "Bamboo Glocal Village". In 2015, she was chosen by AERA as "an upcoming Japanese woman contributing to the 21st century." EDAYA's bamboo jewelry received the Social Products Award 2016 from the Association for the Promotion of Social Products in Japan.

**Profile No. 5****Norimah HJ. Ahmad, Manager**

NURI Wellness Centre, Malaysia  
Service (Massage)



Norimah started her massage business after ending a 10-year career as a massage instructor working for the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB). Her strong will to create more job opportunities for the blind in Malaysia was shaped and strengthened when she participated in a technical training program in Okinawa and Tsukuba provided by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). She was impressed to see that the blind are regarded as professionals in Japan and are confident enough to provide high-quality massage services. She is currently running two massage locations in Kuala Lumpur along with her skilled staff.

**Profile No. 6****Akiko Nishio, Managing Director**

A To Z Language Centre, Malaysia  
Service (Japanese Language School)



Akiko moved to Malaysia in 1999 after graduating from university to pursue a new life as a Japanese language teacher. After three and a half years there, she was thinking of moving when she was offered financial support to found and manage a Japanese language school. Though hesitant at first, she decided to take the challenge. There were many challenges, of course, such as frequent changes in requirements for work permits and visas. However, through the support of friends and networks of chambers of commerce and business associations, her business is expanding.

**Profile No. 7****Siong Wee Li, Sole Proprietor**

HnH, Japan  
Service (Guest House)



Wee Li, a Malaysian married to a Japanese, lives with her family in Nagano, Japan. Moved by a Malaysian entrepreneurial spirit, she decided to start a guest house business in 2010 when her children had grown in order to promote her community and facilitate interaction between the community and foreigners. Initially, she had to go through many lengthy procedures and deal with negative attitudes about wives working outside the home in the local community, but she was persistent and overcame all obstacles to establish her guesthouse. Despite having health problems, she was determined to move forward, slowly but steadily.

**Profile No. 8****Ayane Shiraki, CEO/Founder**

Swallow Culture and Arts Ltd., China  
Service (Music School)



Ayane opened a music school for Japanese residents in Shanghai in 2016, which had been a dream from a young age. She was born in China but grew up in Japan because of her father's work and graduated from a Japanese university. Having both Chinese and Japanese backgrounds, Ayane wanted to engage in work that would bridge Japan and China. Because she was gifted with musical talent, she decided to start a music school. Company management in China is not easy, but it is also very rewarding. Now, she aims to increase the number of her Chinese students. She also plans to spread awareness of the riches of Japanese culture throughout China by way of music.

**Profile No. 9****Makiko Noshi, CEO/Founder**

KBT Ltd., China  
Manufacturing (Beverage)



Makiko, together with her Chinese partner, founded KBT Ltd. in 2002. In those days, it was difficult to secure sources of safe water in China. Therefore, they found a business opportunity in the water bottle business. In the beginning, Makiko faced various difficulties, especially in keeping up with frequent changes in regulations and the business environment, but she managed to overcome the obstacles through her dedicated work and broad network. Now, her company has a large share in China's drinking water market. She is now trying to diversify into the water purifier market. Makiko thinks it is very important to anticipate future demand in the Chinese market in order to succeed there.

**Profile No. 10****SungUn Chang, CEO**

YOLK, South Korea  
Manufacturing and Sales (Solar Related Products)



While studying object design at the Art Institute of Chicago in the United States, SungUn won several international design awards such as the Red Dot and iF awards. After graduation, she established YOLK, a solar-power company. She believes that solar energy is one of the world's greatest energy sources. YOLK's first product, Solar Paper, became one of the most successful solar projects in the history of crowd-funding, and has expanded opportunities for the private generation of energy. Its second project, Solar Cow project, is helping to stop child labor in Africa by using a solar power system to provide parents with solar energy if they send their children to school. The pilot project started in 2018 in Kenya and has already achieved significant results.

**Profile No. 11****Jung Hwa Lee, CEO**

Just In Style, South Korea  
Manufacturing and Sales (Clothing)



For a long time, Lee wanted to be a fashion designer. In her university days, she decided to establish her own fashion brand and share her experiences with younger people. After graduation, she started working as a clothing designer while learning advanced fashion design techniques in graduate school. She then moved to Japan to study dress modeling at Bunka Women's University. After obtaining a doctorate, she started to teach design at a Seoul university as an adjunct professor. In 2016, her own brand company, Just In Style, was launched. She is now trying to expand her share in South Korea as well as to expand her business in China and Japan.

**Profile No. 12****Gita Wolf, Publisher**

Tara Books Pvt. Ltd., India  
Publishing



After living in Germany for 10 years, Gita moved back to India. In 1994, she started Tara Books, which publishes illustrated and handmade books. The handmade books, which are silkscreen printed on handmade paper and bound by hand, are known worldwide. Interested in both written and visual media, Gita has always been keen to explore their relationship in creative and unorthodox ways. As a feminist, she believes in non-hierarchical models of functioning based on dialogue and cooperation. Over the past 24 years, she has been committed to bringing a variety of marginalized voices and perspectives to readers, while continually playing with the book form. Thirteen of her publications have been printed in Japanese and are highly regarded by Japanese readers.

**Profile No. 13****Hanna Keraf, Co-Founder**

Du'Anyam, Indonesia  
Manufacturing and Sales (Textile product)



After graduating from Japan's Asia Pacific University (APU), Hanna worked for an international NGO doing local economic development in eastern Indonesia aimed at economically empowering small/medium farmers. Using her professional experience and network to work for poverty reduction, she started her social business, Du'Anyam, together with her two partners. Du'Anyam is a social enterprise that produces and distributes wicker crafts to empower women and improve the health and nutrition of women and children in Indonesia. Today, she works with more than 500 local weavers and produces up to 3,000 products a month, which are exported to the United States, Korea and Japan.

**Profile No. 14****Lyn Lee, Founder/CEO**

Awfully Chocolate Pte. Ltd., Singapore  
Retail and Service (Confectionery, Café and Restaurant)



In 1998, Lyn Lee embarked on an adventure to create the perfect chocolate cake. She started a cake shop selling only one cake, a simple dark chocolate cake, and continued to sell only whole-chocolate cake and chocolate ice cream until 2010, focusing on quality rather than variety. After her bold and tight brand concept became recognized, she expanded her business and currently runs 15 stores, cafes, and restaurants in Singapore and about three times as many franchised concepts across multiple cities in China. She is a Japanophile who loves Japanese food and culture, from which she often draws much inspiration.

**Profile No. 15****Megumi Florence, CEO**

WHITETREE HEALTH AND BEAUTY PTE. LTD., Singapore  
Retail (Herbal Tea) and Service (Consulting)



Megumi established her beauty and health care brand in Singapore in 2014 after graduating from a design school in Milan, Italy, and working in visual design for several top companies in Japan. With "creating a circle of happiness" as her mission, she provides high-quality organic herbal teas adapted to the modern lifestyle in six countries. Highly conscious of environmental issues, she has started her own farms by making effective use of fallow fields in cooperation with farmers in Japan. She also provides consulting services on branding and writes frequently on beauty- and health-related topics.

**Profile No. 16****Lee Meiling, Founder**

SUPERMAMA, Singapore  
Service (Gallery Shop)



Meiling and her husband Edwin started a gallery store in Singapore in 2011 to showcase and sell what they had collected. They also create meaningful objects such as authentic souvenirs and design pieces produced in collaboration with designers and craft workshops. They have built solid partnerships with Japanese craft workshops in fields such as metalworking, porcelain making, wood crafting, and glass blowing. The first collection of Supermama's Porcelain, which was designed in Singapore and made in Arita, Japan, was awarded the President's Design Award in 2013, Singapore's highest design award. The finest design collections are regularly presented in shops in Singapore and Tokyo.

**Profile No. 17****Passawee Tapasanan Kodaka, Founder/Managing Director**

Folkcharm Co., Ltd., Thailand  
Manufacture and Sales (Closing)



After working for several international organizations, Passawee founded Folkcharm in 2014. This project has roots in her master's thesis, entitled "Economic and Social Empowerment of the Home-based Women Workers towards the Promotion of Gender Equality," which she conducted in a village in Thailand. She found that cotton producers were not paid properly, and she decided to start a project to empower villagers and promote gender equality. This required much negotiation in the village and hard work in stock and sales management. Most of her clients are working Thai women in their 30s. She recently started an online sales business.

**Profile No. 18****Miyuki Shimada, Managing Director**

Planeta Organica, Thailand  
Manufacturing and Sales (Bed Linen)



In 2001, Miyuki fell in love with organic cotton in Chiang Mai, Thailand, where she was visiting while on her way to Europe. She returned there and started a business that produces organic cotton bed linen. She incorporated the business in 2004. Communicating with weavers from a culture and background far different from her own, unfamiliar and frequently changing laws and regulations, and the need to recruit good staff were among her major challenges. She overcame these through patience and a firm faith in her concepts about what and how to produce. In addition to the shop in Chiang Mai, she will soon re-open a branch in Bangkok.



**Profile No. 19****Geraldine S. Batoon, President**

iCube, Inc., Philippines  
Service (Business Consulting)



Geraldine was born and raised in Japan. Having an intimate knowledge of Japan, she wanted to help bridge Japan and the Philippines. During her early career as a venture capital manager focusing on the seed stage, she came to believe that entrepreneurship is the key factor for sustainable development of the Philippines. In 2001, she founded iCube Inc., a consultancy firm that helps Japanese firms to invest and incubate their businesses in the Philippines and vice versa. Currently, iCube Inc. is expanding its comprehensive business management services to Japanese firms.

**Profile No. 20****Midori Ogino, CEO**

BROWN SUGAR 1ST. Co., Ltd., Japan  
Import, Wholesale and Retail (Food)



Born in Fukuoka Prefecture in Japan's southernmost island of Kyushu, Midori is a mom entrepreneur whose now-successful brand grew from humble origins. In 2013, she established a company after she fell in love with coconut oil, a non-dairy substitute for butter, margarine, and shortening. Her business decisions are based on one question: "Would I feed this to my child?" Midori's priority is bringing food, health, and fun to the consumer's table. She not only plays a role in producing food but is also helping to tackle food waste. BS1st's Organic Extra Virgin Oil, which received a two-star accolade at the Great Taste Awards 2018, is now carried in more than 3,000 stores nationwide.

**Profile No. 21****Teiba Nirmala Junko, CEO**

Encess Ltd., Japan  
Service (Business Consulting)



Born in India, Junko came to Japan 20 years ago to teach IT. After she spent nine years in Japan, she thought of leaving, but she decided to stay and take up the challenge of starting a business in Japan. She obtained an MBA and worked as a business advisory manager in charge of India and Asia for several years. This work experience gave her a clear idea about the weaknesses of Japanese companies operating in India and led her to establish a consulting firm in 2011. The services offered include consulting, training, seminars, branding, media and recruitment.

**Profile No. 22****Tomiko Fukushima, CEO/Founder**

Brilliant Associates Inc., Japan  
Manufacturing and Service (Food)



When Tomiko's husband started his business, she supported him and did not think she would eventually run her own business. She tried to learn new skills to help him, and a visit to Sweden was one of those learning activities. She was inspired by the advanced gender equality she saw in Sweden and decided to start her business in 2004. She makes good use of support programs and her networks to solicit information and assistance. Her pink-colored curry, soy sauce, and wasabi have become famous overseas, and many tourists visit Tottori to taste her food products, by which she greatly contributes to the promotion of the local area.

**Profile No. 23****Mineko Hasegawa, President**

In Dream Inc., Japan  
Import and Sales (Clothing)



Mineko resumed working after being a housewife for 15 years and joined a joint venture firm that was looking for a business opportunity in India. Mineko participated in the Global Summit of Women in 2004, where she had a fateful encounter with Farah, a young Indian woman selling exquisite Indian stoles to support poor artisans. They clicked, and four months later, Mineko started her business. Quality control and customs procedures are the hardest parts of the business. While competition in online shopping is intensifying, she keeps bringing beautiful crafts to her customers.

**Profile No. 24****Sun Xiaowei, President**

Kyowa Trading Co., Ltd., Japan  
Wholesale (Building Materials and Machinery)



After graduating from a university in China, Xiaowei came to Japan to study at a graduate school. While studying, she worked for Japanese language-instruction companies. This work experience made her understand the differences in the ways of thinking and working between the two countries. After China joined the WTO, the increased trade volume between China and Japan created a business opportunity. Under the new corporate law, she established a trading company in 2005. Being a foreign woman, she had difficulties with financing and gaining the trust of business partners. However, she was patient and worked hard to gain recognition and is now expanding her business to the medical tourism field.

**Profile No. 25****Kaoru Joho, CEO**

Table Cross Inc., Japan  
Service (Information)



Kaoru developed a strong interest in social issues at a very young age. When she was a high school student, she visited an NPO in the United States and realized the need for a permanent system that helped people without depending on charity or donations. As an ambitious university student, Kaoru travelled the world in search of ideas. She started her business while in her third year of university. At first, loan applications were rejected. It was not easy to raise funds for the student entrepreneur, but she has turned weaknesses into strengths and now has 230 businesses partners.

**Profile No.26****Maki Yamada, CEO**

Girls, be Ambitious Inc., Japan  
Import and Sales (Food, etc.)



Maki quit her job to go to the Philippines as a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer in 2010 and worked to promote and market food products and accessories made by NGOs and women's associations. In 2012, she started her business because she wanted to work in the Philippines, and there was no company where she could realize her ambition. Harnessing her experiences and her networks of volunteers and social entrepreneurs built through volunteer work, she has expanded her business to include tourism and consulting in order to help create a fairer society.

**Profile No. 27****Rin Arikawa, CEO/Founder**

La Chouette, Inc., Japan  
Sales and Service (Planning)



Rin started producing sterilized water for home use in 2014 after having experienced "one-ope" situations (for "one operation," meaning a mother raising kids alone, without the support of a husband or in-laws) when her husband was away or busy. She incorporated her business in 2016. Her true aim is not just to produce sterilized water but to make society a comfortable and equal place for all. She set up a foundation in India and Japan to promote education and training. She plans to engage several stakeholders in Japan and India to fill the labor force shortage in Japan's nursing sector.