



“Never stop learning. Treasure what you’ve learned and share it with those who are less fortunate without expecting any reward.”

## **vilma cabulisan, aidha graduate: from self-improvement to self-employment**

Like most migrant women from her country, Vilma was forced to come to Singapore because she couldn't find a job in the Philippines. “It was tough because I didn't have a college degree.” She's now been working for eleven years as a domestic helper. Despite the usual hardships that come with living away from family, Vilma remains steadfast in her desire to provide a better future for her daughter. “That's why I've always wanted to have my own business and be self-employed – so that I don't need to be away from her anymore.”

Thankfully, Vilma's employers helped her take the first step to upgrading herself by introducing her to aidha in 2009. She took up courses in Building Self-Esteem, Effective Communications, Planning and Time Management, Managing Your Money, as well as the Compass Club. “These courses made a difference in my life, especially since many people look down on you when you are a domestic worker. Sometimes even asking for help is not easy. I've encountered mean people, who, when I asked for directions, simply ignored me. aidha helped me to build my confidence and communicate effectively.”

She also took up the Entrepreneurship course, as part of which she wrote a business plan. While the original business plan she submitted was for a bookshop, the exercise proved useful when it came time to write another business plan for her exciting new venture: a *sari-sari* (convenience) store and canteen which is launching this month in the Philippines!

“The idea for this business came from my daughter when she noted that we live very near a school and only a few meters from the main road of our village. So our location is very accessible to students and most of the traffic. The capital is around 25,000 pesos (SGD700+) and the business will be managed by my mother and daughter.”

Even though she has already graduated from aidha and has this new business to think about, Vilma continues to volunteer her Sundays as a student intern. She inspires us with her simple life philosophy: “Never stop learning. Treasure what you've learned and share it with those who are less fortunate without expecting any reward.”

With her new business poised to take off, Vilma is certainly on her way to being her own boss someday. “I'm really grateful for the skills I learned at aidha which gave me courage to turn my dreams into reality.”

Thank you for being an inspiration to us too, Vilma!

*by ting claravall*

**Refer your friend to aidha** and receive a \$10 cash voucher & stand the chance to win an HTC Cha Cha phone through our **lucky draw!** Next drawing is on May 20th – the more friends that you refer, the more chances to win!

### **Enroll in Module 2!**

Have you completed your Module 1 courses, or finished at least 4 sessions of the Compass Club? Then you can sign up for **Module 2-July Batch**. Register early, spaces are limited!

### **Why sign up for Module 2?**

Learn to write your business plan, practice giving formal business presentation & receive your aidha Certificate in Entrepreneurship at graduation!

Don't forget to stop at our new **Digital Library** and explore exciting learning resources at the touch of your fingertips!

**aidha editorial team**

mariana marques

allison morris

magali muria

ting claravall

tania sa

feedback or comments, please email:  
communications@aidha.org