

ASSIST *Now*

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INNOVATION AND INCLUSIVE IMPACT

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ABOUT ASSIST

Asia Society for Social Improvement and Sustainable Development (ASSIST) was established in 2003 with the aim of addressing sustainability challenges in the Philippines.

Today, it has evolved into a self-sustaining, Pan-Asian, non-profit organization driven by passion and purpose for progress and prosperity in the region.



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projects



20+
countries



1,000,000+
individuals reached

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WORKING TOWARDS THE SDGs

As part of the global development community, ASSIST aligns its initiatives with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To demonstrate this, stories in this newsletter end with the icons of the SDGs that they help achieve.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



SWEETER FUTURE FOR CACAO FARMERS

Davao City – Increased productivity is afoot for 83 cacao farmers in Mindanao as they completed the Farmer Field School (FFS) that ran from May 20 to June 28, 2019. Cacao farmers were empowered with cutting-edge knowledge and skills on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for a sustainable and profitable harvest.

Alongside the FFS, a series of educational discussion and model farm tours was conducted on May 29 and June 26, 2019. More than 140 cacao farmers from Compostela Valley, Davao del Norte, Agusan del Sur and Davao City took part in the activity. After the series of activities, the farmers were able to gain significant insights and best practices for a more effective cacao crop nutrition program.

Cacao Pro is a public-private partnership project under the DeveloPPP program of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. This project is implemented through DEG in partnership with Yara Fertilizers Philippines, Inc. and ASSIST.

Contributed by Yasser Gutierrez, Project Manager



Global cacao shortage is estimated to reach 1 million metric tons by 2020. Project Cacao Pro aims to address this challenge.

SOWING THE SEEDS OF HARD WORK

It was 9 AM. The view stretches over a field, remnants of onion crops visible in plain sight. Adjacent to the field is a hut, the Onion Learning Center (OLC) launched last January in Brgy. Murtha, San Jose, Occidental Mindoro. For the farmers of San Jose, this place has become a communal venue for learning and education.

Johnny Flojimon, the owner of the hut and the half hectare demo farm, walks in with a big smile on his face. He had just come home from the Occidental Mindoro State College, where he works as a school personnel.

Apart from his full time job, Manong Johnny also manages his own farm. As a matter of fact, he had recently harvested 702 red bags of onions during the last cropping season. A farmer of 40 years, Manong Johnny's latest harvest has been some of his biggest onion produce to date.

"For the past years, we only produced 300 to 400 red bags per harvest," Manong Johnny shares. With a family to support, he relies heavily on his income from the farm to help sustain the needs of his wife and two children. It does not help that pest infestation, crop diseases, and outdated farming technologies and methods have greatly affected his onion produce for the past four decades.

Admittedly, Manong Johnny shared that he was not hands-on in tending to his farm before, because he used to be busy with his job at the school. However,

he was nothing short of excited when the Onion UNION Project came in to his province. "I was really challenged when ASSIST and East-West Seed Company introduced to us the Onion UNION Project," Manong Johnny states happily.

On most days, since the inception of the project, Manong Johnny spends his mornings in the school and his afternoons in the farm. Striking a balance between his day job and his commitment to the project proved to be a challenge for Manong Johnny, but his enthusiasm for this new opportunity only fueled his desire to work even harder.

"I feel very happy putting in work for my farm. I really wanted to involve myself in the project. I believe that when you really love what you're doing, you won't mind putting effort into it," he shares with a hearty laugh. His most recent harvest is indeed a testament to this.

With his 40 years of farming experience, one might expect that he would rather stick to the farming techniques that he has used for decades. But, when asked about what made him very interested in the project, Manong Johnny said, "I prefer using new farming techniques





so we can also level up as farmers. I don't want to be stuck using farming techniques from the 1960s."

Aiming to capacitate onion farmers in the Philippines, the Onion UNION Project introduces the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM), drip irrigation system, and other technologies to capacitate and build the resilience of onion farmers in the country. Learning sessions are conducted in the OLC, wherein farmers like Manong Johnny gather to learn from experts from the East-West Seed Company.

"We just started last cropping season but I have already learned a lot. I got to know about IPM. To avoid worms infesting our onion, we have to catch the male adults, so that the females won't be able to reproduce," recalls Manong Johnny, who has attended all the learning sessions in the OLC.

He also attributes his recent success to the drip irrigation system installed by East-West Seed Company in the demo farm. He claims that his onions have grown bigger and healthier, thanks to the efficient distribution of water in his crops. "I am able to control the amount of water I use for my onions. Now, I don't

have to manually dig passageways. I am also able to save water," Manong Johnny says.

As more developments in the project are underway, Manong Johnny hopes to promote the Onion UNION Project to more farmers in San Jose. "I want to encourage my fellow farmers to attend all the learning session in the OLC, so they will learn how to better manage their onion crops. I also want them to start using IPM, so they can have better yield as well," he said.

With renewed vigor for farming, Manong Johnny had nothing but gratitude for the new opportunities the project has given him and his family. He says, "I would like to thank ASSIST and East-West Seed Company for giving us the Onion UNION Project. I hope that it doesn't end here."



LIVING SMARTLY IN INDIA

Smart home solutions are setting the trend in India's manufacturing industry. With the country's market revenue doubling every three years, an estimated growth of 30% is expected in the smart home solutions market. But despite this growth, there is still a need to create more efficient solutions, targeting specific areas such as clean air and proper ventilation.

The entry of polluted air into residential homes and hospitals has been a constant problem that calls for urgent action.

Polluted air leads to risks of communicable diseases, affecting people of all ages. Thus, ASSIST and Lingel Windows and Doors Technologies Private Limited, through the support of KfW DEG, developed a project to mitigate air pollution through innovative ventilation solutions.

The project, "Smart Window Technology Adaptation for Responsible Living" or SMART-LI, aims to promote healthy air conditions and improve air quality, through the installation of the SMART LI chip in residential homes and medical establishments in India. The SMART-LI chip is a Lingel-manufactured product created to improve air quality in buildings and establishments. The chip acts as a control panel for receiving and sending information to the customer about outdoor air quality, window

control, rain sensor, etc. to the user. A winner of the ACETECH Design Wall 2016 Award, the SMART-LI chip can be installed in Lingel Windows and is connected to the Wi-Fi at the user's place.

Moreover, through the SMART-LI project, underserved youth will be provided employment opportunities and skills enhancement trainings at Lingel's product installations.

The project will be launched in July 2019 in Chennai, New Delhi, Bangalore, Chandigarh, and Mumbai regions. More information about the project will be provided in the next quarter.



OUR DAIRY BREAD: IMPROVING DAIRY FARMERS' PRODUCTIVITY



India is known as one of the leading producers of milk and dairy products worldwide. With an annual production of about 164 million tons of milk, the country's dairy sector generates billions of dollars every year.

Dairy farming is an important source of income for about 70 million rural households. Eighty percent of the country's milk are produced by smallholder farmers who supply to hundreds of big dairy companies. However, these farmers face low productivity and sustenance due to the high cost of feed and fodder, weak cattle health, and low breeding productivity.

launching a project called MILK or "Modernizing dairy sector for Improved Livelihood & Knowledge among dairy farmers." This project aims to improve the productivity and income of farmers by training them in sustainable dairy farming practices and by establishing 10 small pilot farms and a local dairy support center. The project is set to be launched in July.

Through the support of KfW DEG, ASSIST and Thirumala Milk Products Private Limited will be



LEARNING FOOD SAFETY FROM VIETNAM'S RICE MILLS



ASSIST's project AWARE: "Raising food safety awareness within the crop industrial processing sector" in Myanmar has come a long way in improving food safety standards in the country. Through the project, a study tour was recently conducted in one of the biggest rice mills in Vietnam.

Food safety and quality control are crucial to a country's food production industry, both in terms of development and sustenance. In Myanmar, more than half of the country's overall industrial sector is made up of the food industry. However, food safety standards remain weak and require better manufacturing practices. Launched in 2017, project AWARE aims to influence policy makers in enforcing new laws and standards that are aligned with international regulations.

Food safety consultants went to one of the biggest rice mills in Vietnam for a study tour. With

the goal of providing real case studies, this tour enabled the participants to be immersed in good manufacturing practices implemented in Vietnam.

Project AWARE, supported by KfW DEG and Bureau Veritas, benefits small and medium-sized enterprises in the crop-processing sector.



NOWHERE TO GO BUT UP: UPLIFTING SAFETY STANDARDS



While Vietnam's construction industry is growing rapidly every year, concerns about safety and maintenance procedure are also increasing. To minimize the risks associated with elevator and escalator malfunction, ASSIST launched project ELEVATE or "Enhancing Life Safety, Work, & Energy Efficiency in Vietnam through Awareness Training and Education."

In the second quarter of 2019, a series of trainings on health, safety, and environment was held in technical universities and colleges across Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh cities. The training aims to teach potential trainers in universities and colleges with workplace safety courses that they can in turn teach their students who would join the future workforce.

Project ELEVATE also targets to support safety experts to be eligible for the NEBOSH National General Certificate (NGC) in Occupational Health & Safety, which is the most popular

health and safety qualification in the United Kingdom. Those accredited with this qualification can identify, evaluate and control a wide range of workplace hazards.

Project ELEVATE has an overall objective of raising awareness and transferring knowledge on safe and efficient energy usage and deployment of elevators and escalators in Vietnam. The project is supported by Schindler Vietnam and KfW DEG.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



SWITCH

- Skills training batch 4
- Quality, Environment, Health, and Safety (QEHS) practitioner workshop
- Job fair on electronics assembly & machine maintenance



MILK

- Project kick-off



SMART-LI

- Product technicians training
- Project kick-off
- Development of modules for product technicians and technical supervisors



INDIA



VIETNAM



ELEVATE VN

- Training of trainers workplace
Ho Chi Minh City
Ha Noi



PROMPT

- KONE Academy graduation b





HSE awareness

batch 1



PHILIPPINES



CacaoPro

- Launch of farmer field school and showcase forum
- Educational visit to model farms in Mindanao



Onion UNION

- Baseline data analysis



MYANMAR



AWARE

- Gap assessment in factories in Yangon
- Readiness assessment in factories in Mandalay, Shwebo



THE COLLECTIVE MOVEMENT TOWARDS INNOVATION & INCLUSIVE IMPACT



Our main goal is to change the paradigm of consumption through zero-waste packaging solutions." This is how Steve Oh envisions the impact of Innerbottle, an innovative containing solution that encourages zero-waste practices and advocates for a sustainable environment.

In today's increasingly interconnected world, the most prevalent issues we face are not anymore limited by borders. Steve and his start up, Innerbottle, is among the thousands of social enterprises that aim to solve the most pressing development challenges today. From climate change to rampant poverty, these issues cannot be addressed by any individual or organization alone.

The Innovation for Inclusive Impact (IN_PACT) Asia 2019

held last May was a venue that brought together key actors from different sectors to discuss development issues and come up with potential solutions.

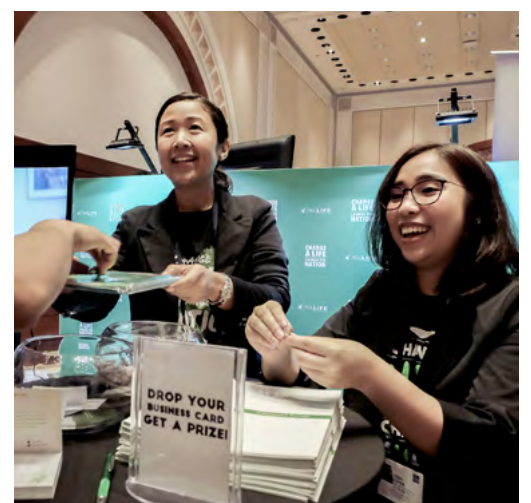
Steve was one of more than 300 delegates who attended the event. Young entrepreneurs like Steve had a chance to present their creative solutions to potential investors and partners during the #InnovASIAN Showcase portion of the event. Each innovator shared their inspiring story of finding their purpose in generating positive and widespread impact through their sustainable products and solutions.

IN_PACT also awarded businesses, startups, academic institutions, accelerators, and incubators who have done remarkable efforts in creating positive social impact. Steve's Innerbottle was recognized as the "Start Up of the Year," for

its potential in promoting a profitable business with a huge social impact for sustainability. Steve sees Innerbottle as a game changer, "Innerbottle reduces the cost of recycling plastics. We can choose what material to use for the bottle's outer shell like recycled paper."

Organized by ASSIST, together with Benilde's Hub for Innovation and Inclusion (HiFi) and the Asian Development Bank, IN_PACT Asia was a chance for key development actors to come together, forge new partnerships, and leave with confidence in a more inclusive and innovative Asia.





A specialized unit of ASSIST Development Solutions, ASSIST Creative Lab (ACL), caters to the unique and varied communication, visibility and knowledge management needs of actors and interventions in the development sector.

The second quarter of 2019 saw ACL work on various projects and engagements with the Asian Development Bank, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, World Group Bank, and the United Nations Development Programme.

ADB AWARENESS CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Asian Development Bank (ADB)



ACL was engaged by ADB's Office of the Compliance Review Panel to develop four guidebooks, a sourcebook, two brochures, one video, training materials, and flashdrives, which serve as awareness-raising materials on the compliance review function of ADB's Accountability Mechanism.

UNDP COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)



In line with UNDP's Paving the Road to SDGs through Governance (Road to SDGs) Project, ACL developed and designed communication materials that feature advocacies, success stories, and best practices. The first among eight deliverables is the Quarter 1 Magazine, which covers projects in Iloilo, Kalinga, and the Dinagat Islands.

WB POST CARD SERIES

World Bank Group (WBG)



To promote its consultation program and dialogues in the Philippines, WBG has partnered with ACL for the production of a series of post cards that will be used to solicit thoughts from the attendees of their events.

giz WHITEBOARD VIDEO & GRAPHIC DESIGNS

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)



As part of GIZ's project called "Strengthening capacities for conflict-induced forced displacement in Mindanao," ACL provided consultancy services to develop: 1) a whiteboard video that explains internal displacement and its impacts; and 2) graphic designs for project collaterals and publications.

UNBOXING DISASTER PREPAREDNESS IN AURORA, PHILIPPINES



Master of Disaster (MOD), ASSIST's social action project, is an inclusive, informative, and fun-packed board game that teaches children aged nine-years-old and above how to prepare and actively respond to common disasters in the Philippines.

During the past quarter, the team behind MOD has been focused on improving the board game, scaling production, and establishing stronger partnerships to ensure disaster preparedness education is easily accessible for everyone.

With the help of the Philippine and German Red Cross, the MOD board games are now available in English, Taglish, and Ilocano. They will be distributed to select communities in Northern Luzon as part of the Red Cross' disaster readiness kits. Furthermore, numerous individuals will be trained to pass on the best disaster preparedness practices to their communities, assuring sustained impact.

Among the selected beneficiaries are schools and the Municipality of Dingalan, Aurora. Bolstered by the financial support provided by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Direct Aid Program, ASSIST met with local government representatives Mayor Shierwin Taay, Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office Head Christias Dagasdas and other Management Committee members to plan and coordinate the provision and roll out of MOD to disaster prone communities and schools. More activities aimed at teaching disaster preparedness in the province of Aurora are set to happen in the coming weeks.



CULTIVATING AN INCLUSIVE OFFICE CULTURE



Employee engagement has considerable effect on productivity and growth of individual employees and the entire company. In an effort to improve our organization's employee engagement, a series of activities has been conducted that focuses on employee's capacity development, as well as physical and mental wellness.

Last May 16, numerous employees from ASSIST Philippine office assembled at a nearby dance studio to learn a simple hip-hop routine, as a break from a hard day's work. The dance instructor led the participants through the choreography, giving everyone a chance to take center stage.

The next activity focused on addressing the learning needs of employees through an easily accessible training. Facilitated by Noemel Macunat, ECCI's own consultant, a seminar on documentation and document

control was delivered on June 4. Through fun icebreakers, an educational lecture, and a short activity, participants were able to learn more about properly managing documented information.

These recreational activities and skills-building classes aim to demonstrate that the well-being and personal development of employees are seen as a priority. More activities will be conducted under the Learning Session and Fitness & Wellness series over the next few months to answer the increasing demand for more.

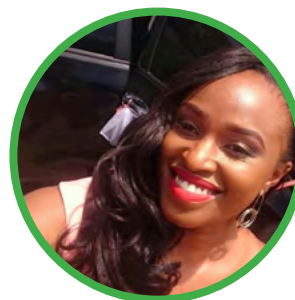
A-TEAM

HOW HAVE YOU RECENTLY CONTRIBUTED TO PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT?



Praveen V., India

I reduce my plastic waste by using reusable steel water bottles and eco bags for my groceries. I also use energy efficient LED lights to reduce my energy consumption.



Miranda Allan, Kenya

I switch off all electrical devices when not in use to save electricity. Recently, I have participated in tree planting activities. I also bring reusable bags and containers all the time to reduce plastic use.



Ngoc Hoang Wang, Vietnam

I joined the Green Living Festival which promoted environment friendly habits. I use reusable containers instead of single use plastic. I also sort and recycle my garbage at home.



Gabrielle Tañada, Philippines

Recently, I participated in a beach clean up and spent hours picking up trash for proper disposal. It was the most satisfying feeling leaving the beach cleaner than it was.

iMPACT

Insights & Inspiration for Social Innovation

iMPACT Magazine covers dedicated features on the issues and strategies in the development sector. Over 1,500 copies are published in print quarterly, discussing themes in nonprofit, CSR, social enterprise and philanthropic leaders.



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MOD

MASTER OF DISASTER

Revolutionizes disaster preparedness in the language children understand the most: **Play!**



MOD is an informative and fun-packed board game teaching children aged 9 and above how to prepare and respond to the most common disasters in the Philippines.

Developed by



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