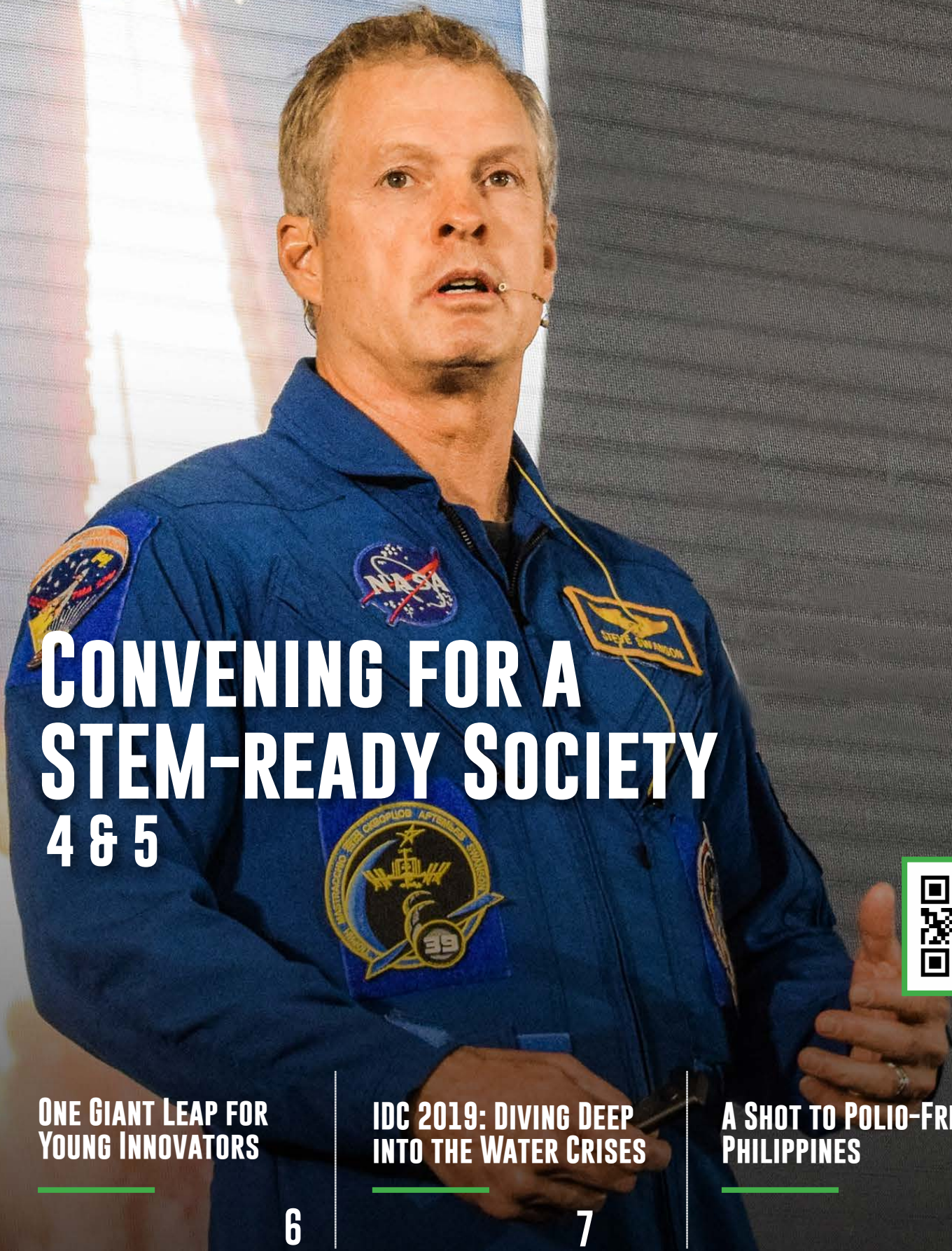


# ASSIST *Now*



## CONVENING FOR A STEM-READY SOCIETY 4 & 5



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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.



**300+**  
projects



**20+**  
countries



**1,000,000+**  
individuals reached

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**LET US KNOW** your thoughts about this quarter's newsletter.

# 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



# 2019 at a Glance



Clickable titles



JAN



FEB

MAR



MAY

JUL

## **Paving the Roads to Sustainable Development Goals through Good Governance (Roads2SDGs)**

8 instructional videos and guidelines for local government units designed and developed by ASSIST Creative Lab.

OCT



NOV

**International Disaster Conference 2019**  
300 participants discussed solutions to address the risks and challenges associated with too little and too much water.

## **First Integrated STEM Leadership Summit in Asia**

300 delegates participated in the discussion about pioneering experiences in STEM education.

DEC





# Convening for a STEM-ready Society

Over 20 international and local experts in various fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education gathered to discuss innovative experiences in delivering STEM education to address the most pressing problems of society for the First Integrated STEM Leadership Summit in Asia last November 21-24 at the Shangri-La's Mactan Resort and Spa in Cebu, Philippines.

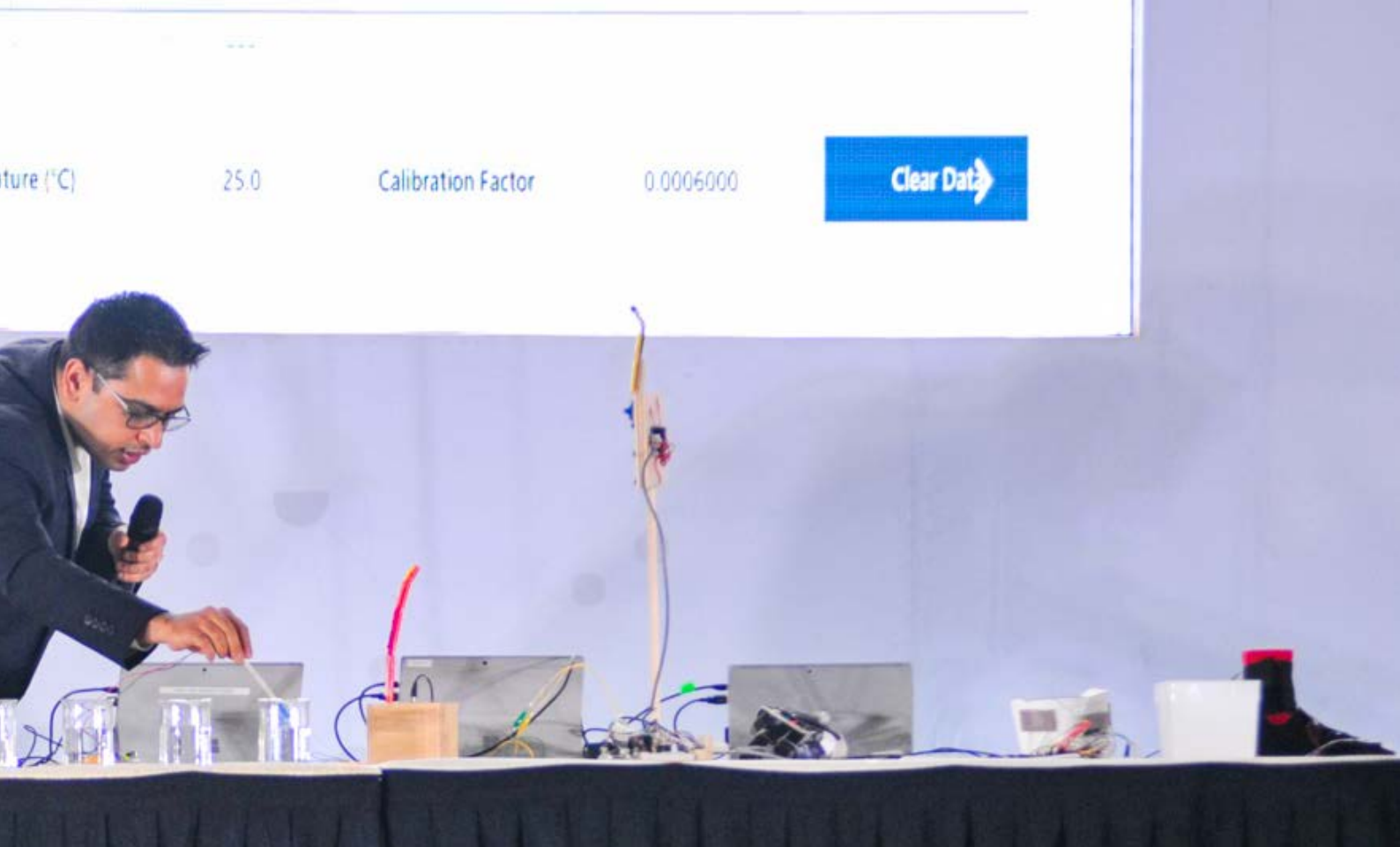
Dubbed as Asia's First Integrated STEM Leadership Summit, the event's agenda was to provide a platform for cross-sectoral dialogue and collaboration among government, academe, industry, and the public sector to emphasize the significance of building a STEM-ready 21st century society.

Among the high profile speakers included Dr. Victoria Levin, Senior Economist at The World Bank, David Hollands, Head of Education Strategy at HP - Asia Pacific and Japan, and Dr. Steven Swanson, Former Astronaut and ISS Commander, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Atty. Nepomuceno Malaluan, Undersecretary and Chief of Staff of the Office of the Secretary under the Department of Education opened the summit, who emphasized the importance of quality through education. "Quality is always a moving subject. It is not static. But in order to achieve quality standard, we must revolutionize our curriculum," Malaluan said. In response to the growing recognition of STEM education in the private sector, Kelly List Wells, Founder and Executive Director of the STEM Leadership Alliance (US) emphasized on "breaking the silos"

and how working collaboratively can enrich the development of STEM education in the world.

The three-day summit concluded with various panel discussions and workshops that tackled holistic approaches in discussing STEM such as building an Industry 4.0-ready workforce, developing a culture of innovation and engaging women and girls in STEM and fostering cross-collaboration, and in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.





**Dr. Steven Swanson**

*Former Astronaut and ISS Commander, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)*



**Dr. Manabu Sumida**

*Regional Representative for Asia, International Council for Science  
Educational Director, Japan Science Education Professor at Ehime University*

"I think space exploration is a really good way to motivate students to look at careers in STEM differently. It's an exciting, rewarding career path."

"We need cooperation between industry, academia, and the government to create a new human center of society"



**David Hollands**

*Education Strategy Manager, Asia Pacific & Japan, HP*



**Lina Benete**

*Head of the Education Unit, UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office*



**Mary Grace Colet**

*Executive Director, Gokongwei Brothers Foundation*

"In terms of STEM, disruption is a norm. This means that the reinvention of work today will change. But guess what? Human beings will decide what those new types of work will be. As a nation, we have to be part of deciding what those will be."

"We need to promote models—especially female role models, to attract young people like young girls to STEM fields."

"Our children, cannot dream to be what they cannot imagine. [We hope to] help them envision what STEM careers look like. What a day in the life be?"



# One Giant Leap for Young Innovators



It is undeniable that Science and Math education propel groundbreaking innovations. As the world moves toward the 4th Industrial Revolution, investment in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) school programs becomes more crucial. Last year, ASSIST and Telstra Foundation implemented the STEM Learning and Application through Play or STEM LEAP in

Zapatera Elementary School in Cebu City. The program was completed recently with remarkable impact on the lives of future scientists, mathematicians, and innovators.

With the goal of igniting and nurturing students' interest in the sciences, the STEM LEAP program teaches Grade 5 and 6 students science and math concepts using a fun-filled play-based methodology which sparks students' curiosity, resourcefulness,

creativity, and imagination. The program promotes hands-on, experience-based learning activities which also encourage collaboration, leadership, and teamwork.

From July to December 2019, the program has engaged 240 students, 50 volunteers, and 20 teachers, and has conducted 16 classroom learning activities. One such learning activity is the Environmental Hackathon which encourage design thinking concepts to solve relevant environmental issues. The students designed devices that can catch or filter plastics and solid wastes in the ocean.

Ricardo Aman, School Principal of Zapatera Elementary School expressed hopes for the program, "STEM LEAP challenges our teachers to deliver, in a meaningful way, hands-on activities for our pupils to spark their interest in the sciences, so that in the near future we can produce good innovators and scientists that can help us in building our nation."

Upon completion of the project, 94% of students expressed strong desire to pursue STEM in senior high school and

the students' interest and enthusiasm for STEM has increased by 47%. The school's overall performance in math and science inter-school competitions has also improved significantly. Recently two Grade 6 students who were direct beneficiaries of the STEM LEAP program bagged the 3rd spot at the STeAM UP High 2019 Inter-school Elementary Public Schools Science, Technology, and Mathematics Quiz Bowl.

Due to the success of the program, plans for extending its implementation and covering more areas in the Philippines are underway.



# Creating a Disaster-ready Dingalan, Aurora

MOD conducted an inter-school competition as part of its project closure activity in Dingalan, Aurora, last November 29. Students from different schools, including Saint Patrick's Academy, Dingalan National High School, Paltic Elementary School, Carasagan Elementary School, and Dingalan Central School participated in the event.

A total of 500 MOD game sets were delivered in Dingalan, which impacted more than 3000 students in 10 schools across the municipality. This project was made possible with the support of Australian Embassy's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.



# INTERNATIONAL DISASTER CONFERENCE 2019

Proofing through Innovation

OV  
19

**IDC 2019:**

# Diving Deep into the Water Crises



**W**ater is tied to many concerns faced on local and global scales. From food insecurity to conflict, migration, and financial instability, the question of how to manage the scarcity and overabundance of water urgently needs to be answered. Top leaders, experts, policy-makers, and practitioners across Asia gathered last November 21 in Manila to discuss the global risks and challenges associated with water at the International Disaster Conference (IDC) 2019.

IDC 2019, co-organized by the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) and Asia Society for Social Improvement and Sustainable Transformation (ASSIST), is part of a series of discussions in the field of disaster and crisis management. This year's conference presented learning, best practices, and collaborative measures that can address the central theme of "Future-Proofing Water through Innovation," and further progress the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation; and Goal 13: Climate Action.

The International Disaster Conference 2019 opened with the Dean and President of AIM, Dr. Jikyeong Kang, who called out to the academe, governments, multilateral

agencies, and nonprofit organizations to strengthen critical water management policies and practices and foster constructive and inclusive discussions. A sentiment which was resoundingly seconded by the Secretary of the Climate Change Commission Emmanuel de Guzman during his closing remarks, "The science is unequivocal: Climate change is speeding up, moving faster than us. We need faster and bolder responses from all if we are to win this fight for human survival and security. It is in this context that this conference becomes more crucial as a platform for key stakeholders to define where and how we must move forward."

The consensus from the diverse gathering at the International Disaster Conference was that water is an unquestionably vital resource, that must be managed as a shared responsibility between governments, industries, and civil society. Collective action is necessary amongst various stakeholders to synergize plans and resources that will not only address the current context but more so the long-term impacts of climate change on the socio-economic landscape of the Philippines and across Asia.



**Dr. Jikyeong Kang**  
President & Dean, Asian Institute of Management (AIM)

"It is imperative that we, from the higher education, who focus on Asian businesses and societies, do our part in helping sectors to become more resilient in terms of environmental protection and climate change."



**Patrick Wesner**  
Deputy Mission Director  
USAID in the Philippines

"Access to water is one of the most basic human needs and your collective efforts directly improve the quality of people's lives. In addition, building resilience to water related disasters positively impacts millions of Filipinos every year."



# PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



## Modernizing dairy sector for Improved Livelihood & Knowledge among dairy farmers (MILK)

Awareness sessions on sustainable dairy management practices, feed, clean milk production were conducted for the dairy farmers in Tiruvannamalai.



INDIA



VIETNAM



## Promote Technical Education of Mechanics and Electronics

Graduation ceremony of project's training program



## Enabling, building and supporting Cooperatives

Farmers from Can Tho in Global GAP standards



## Baking training to Agriculture and Entrepreneurship

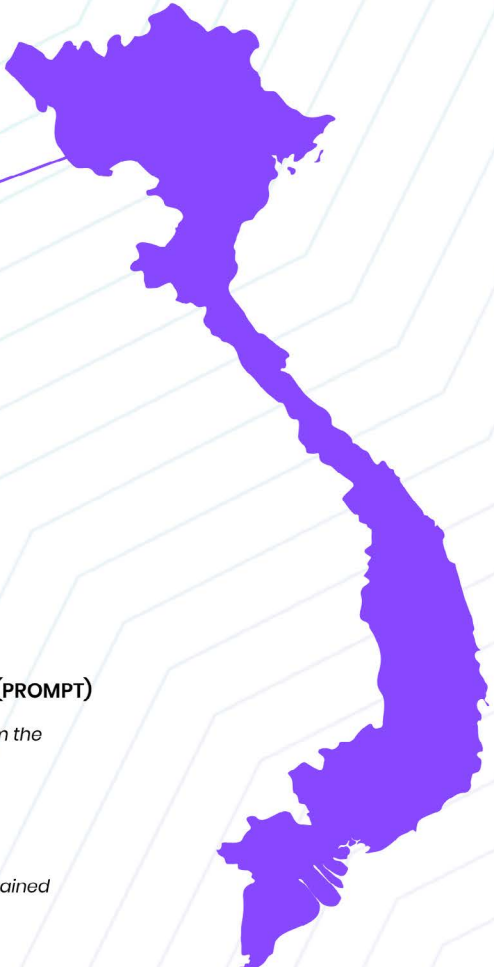
Twelve students were trained as bakers and pastry chefs and started their own businesses



## Beauty for Better Life

The first mobile training program





**Education and Reform Electrification to Professional (PROMPT)**

for 21 students who benefited from the program was conducted.

**Cooperative capacity**

and Dong Thap provinces were trained in cooperatives.

**Augment Knowledge (BAKE) Development**

trained in basic terminologies of professional bakers and bakery organization and management.

**Beauty (L'Oreal)**

learning center on a mobile container classroom was launched.



**PHILIPPINES**



**Onion Union**

Classes in the Onion Learning Centers opened in its second year.

# Building Effective Partnerships

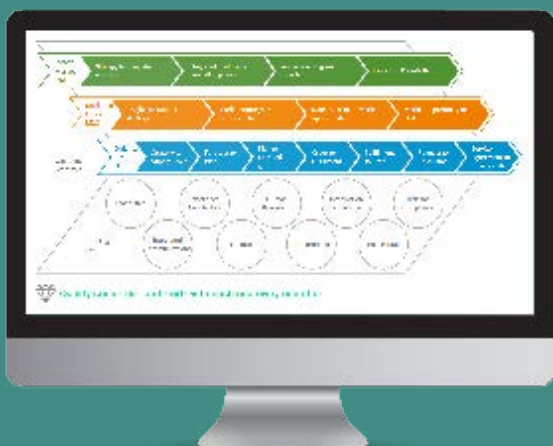
The World Bank Group (WBG) partnered with ASSIST Creative Lab (ACL) to create a Communications Toolkit for its Global Partnership for Education (GPE) program, which aims to enhance mutual accountability among partners at country-level partnerships.

Since its inception in 2002, the GPE has developed into a wide-ranging multi-stakeholder partnership focused on supporting and financing education in low and lower-middle-income countries. The toolkit, which will support the effective rollout of the GPE, will be produced in English and French and include materials that show its core messages and objectives.

The materials include web-based animated videos as well as PowerPoint presentations. Testimonials from country-level partners in different regions will also be included to communicate some of the key messages, such as what it means to be a GPE grant agent, coordinating agency, and government partner or CSO.



# A Course on Quality Management



ASSIST Creative Lab (ACL) is working with Signify (previously known as Philips Lighting), a consumer lighting company to develop scalable, efficient and interactive eLearning courses for use of the internal team. An example of this is the Quality Systems Foundation Training, an interactive course designed to teach Signify internal stakeholders on the importance of maintaining quality in their management processes. Aside from eLearning courses, Signify has also partnered with ACL to create materials on customer learning and development support.



# A Shot to Polio-Free Philippines

The Department of Health (DOH) has declared a polio outbreak in the Philippines last September 19, following the detection of two polio cases in the provinces of Lanao Del Sur and Laguna and two additional cases in the Mindanao region.

Two rounds of synchronized vaccination campaign called Sabayang Patak Kontra Polio were conducted

with the help of Local Government Units to prevent the disease from spreading. DOH has tapped ASSIST Creative Lab (ACL) to support the dissemination of the campaign through audio and video materials.

Throughout the duration of the Sabayang Patak Kontra Polio campaign, ACL shall produce television and radio clips, and public service announcements which are slated to air no later

than January 20, and is targeted to caregivers and families with kids.

The campaign will be administered in the affected areas of NCR and Mindanao until the end of the month, targeting over 4.3 million children under five years of age who are most vulnerable to the disease.

Polio or poliomyelitis is a highly contagious disease caused by the polio virus which attacks the nervous

system. Its hallmark symptoms include fever, headache, vomiting, stiff neck, and sudden limping. If left untreated, it can lead to permanent paralysis or even death.



## BAKED TO SUCCEED: PROPELLING VIETNAM'S PASTRY INDUSTRY



Lack of skilled workers and poor interest among Vietnamese continue to torment the country's baking industry. The problem is further aggravated by strong competition from industrial players and the ever-changing taste of consumers.

ASSIST Vietnam's answer to the problem is the BAKE (Baking Training to Augment Knowledge and Entrepreneurial Development) project, which aims to establish a vocational baking training center in Ho Chi Minh City that offers specialized skills training that encourage modern baking techniques to improve the country's baking trade.

Last December 17, the BAKE project held its second batch of training in Ly Tu Trong College where a total of 12 students learned from courses on basic terminologies of professional bakers, pastry chefs and station organization, and management.

Over the course of the project, a total of 140 craft bakers and 60 vocational school students will be trained. A course completion certificate with a logo of Saf Viet will be given to them by the end of the training sessions.



## BEAUTY WITH A PURPOSE

Gender equality has been a long contested topic in Vietnam. Despite the country's effort to narrow the issue of gender gap, women and young girls, particularly in rural areas are yet to be fully recognized in society.

The Beauty for a Better Life project was launched by ASSIST to support less privileged women by establishing mobile training centers to train them on beauty services and entrepreneurship. The project, in partnership with personal care company, L'Oréal Vietnam, aims to reach 320 women in remote regions in 4 provinces: Yen Bai, Thanh Hoa, Ha Giang, Dien Bien and

develop their skills to become certified hairdressers and makeup artists. The training centers are also designed to support women in opening their own salons through micro-credit programs from local sources such as the Vietnam Women Association.

The first mobile training center was launched in Vietnam on a mobile container classroom, where training classes have been organized during the mid of November last year.



## MILKING AWARENESS WITH PROJECT MILK

More than 150 dairy farmers gathered for an awareness session as part of a continuous effort to instill the importance and benefits of sustainable dairy management practices.

Veterinary doctors from Thirumala Milk Products in India led the discussion on topics such as cattle feed management and clean milk production. A total of six sessions split into three days enabled dairy farmers to learn more on the proper method of milking the cow as well as maintaining a hygienic environment. The awareness session is part of the MILK (Modernizing dairy sector for Improved Livelihood &

Knowledge among dairy farmers) project, a public private partnership model funded by KFW DEG and Thirumala Milk Products Private Limited implemented by ASSIST in association with Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS) which aims to boost the productivity and income of farmers through sustainable dairy farming education.



## CREATING SPACE FOR SHARED LEARNING

**T**echnical and vocational education and training (TVET) is the lifeline of any economy. It is crucial in promoting economic development and improving the quality of employment. Recognizing the importance of TVET in building sustainable communities, ASSIST has integrated TVET in many of its projects in the Philippines, South Asia, and the Mekong Region.

Last December 11, representatives from the Colombo Plan Staff College (CPSC) visited ASSIST to learn more about the organization's TVET experience. CPSC is an intergovernmental organization for human resources development in Asia and the Pacific region for TVET. CPSC's programs and services are primarily intended to equip TVET personnel with up-to-date knowledge and skills in various areas of interest. The visit is part of the College's program on Results-Based Project Management in Technical and Vocational Education and Training Institutions.

Building on years of experience with TVET programs, ASSIST project managers and its Managing Director, Sreeni Narayanan, shared best practices and lessons learned. ASSIST believes in the value of learning through example and first-hand experience of others who share the same advocacies and welcomes such learning opportunities in the future.

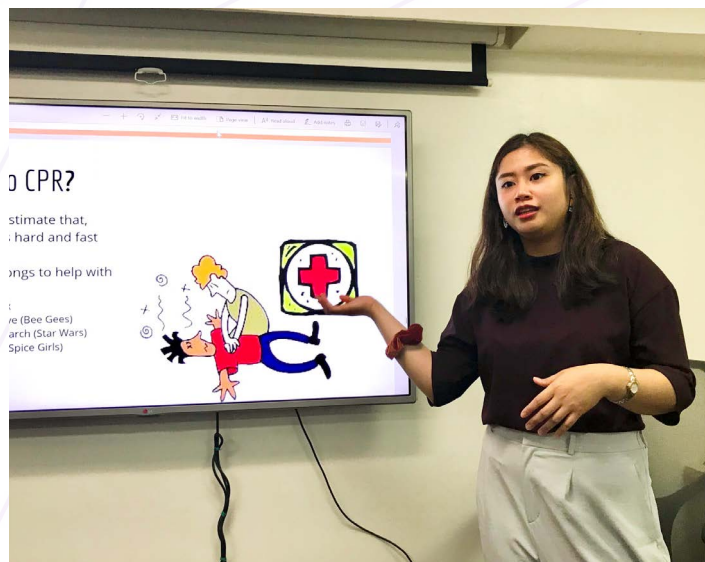


## FIRST AID TRAINING, MORE THAN A BAND-AID SOLUTION

**H**ealth and safety are unquestionably paramount within the workplace and it is the responsibility of the company to care for the wellbeing of its employees. A recent International Labour Organization publication reported that approximately 2.78 million workers die annually from occupational accidents and work-related diseases and an additional 374 million workers suffer from non-fatal occupational accidents.

Here at ASSIST, we work to build capacity and promote development across numerous sectors; from the office to public schools in the Philippines, residential areas in India, factories in Vietnam and slums in Kenya. Our ASSIST colleagues are exposed to a wide range of environments, and thus numerous potential risks and hazards.

Recognizing that most accidents are largely preventable and that consequences can be alleviated with proper knowledge and preparation,



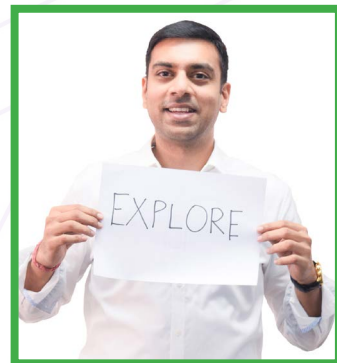
ASSIST organized First Aid training sessions for all employees last November and December. Participants benefited from learning about the most common accidents at the workplace, the Dos and Don'ts for delivering first aid, and the best practices for general health and safety. One of the most important directions was to first determine when it is better to provide immediate aid and when to wait for a professional. The First Aid training sessions are the start of a series of lectures organized to improve work health and safety internally to ensure that employees feel safe, secure, and valued.

As the old proverb states, "Better a thousand times careful than once dead." ASSIST shall continue to promote more health and safety training to ensure that its staff and volunteers are equipped with the proper resources and skills to manage health risks and hazards.



# A-TEAM

2020, A Year Of..



# MOD

## MASTER OF DISASTER

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



**IN SCHOOL • AT WORK • AT HOME  
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An original social action  
developed by



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