

IMPACT

Insights & Inspiration for Social Innovation

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Aqua Foundation's XII World Aqua Congress

International Conference & Exhibition

22nd - 23rd November, 2018, New Delhi, India



Theme: Enhancing Water Use Efficiency

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- Water Resources: Availability, Management, Quality
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15 INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S RIGHTS MANDATORY IN SDG DISCOURSE

As countries try and race toward the SDGs, the rights of indigenous peoples are dangerously falling by the wayside, write Gan Shimray and Jo Ann L. Guillao, of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact.



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26 THE SOUND OF COMMUNITIES

Community radio will take stock and adapt to new technology and relook the meaning of “community” with the concepts of both community and media in flux. Meera Rajagopalan explores.



36 BOUND TO NO BARS

After ending up on the wrong side of the law, Frederick Hutson saw how inefficient inmate services were and formed Pigeonly to help bridge the gap. Ian Jamotillo writes on this U.S.-based start-up and how it is helping prisoners connect with the outside world.



51 HOW DO YOU CREATE A DIVERSE WORKPLACE?

In Asia, large gaps in inclusion persist in the corporate workplace, in spite of diversity training and other initiatives. Experts weigh in with suggestions on how to create a more inclusive and diverse workplace.

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The Story of a Conference Newbie
by iMPACT Staff

This issue features icons that represent articles pertaining to inclusion of different demographics.



Senior



Incarcerated



Indigenous Peoples



Digital



Disability



Gender

Editor's Note

Dear reader,

As I write this, the excitement in India about Article 377 being struck down by the Supreme Court of the country, effectively decriminalizing homosexuality, has somewhat abated. While gender activists have warned that it not time to be complacent, it is indeed cause for celebration, for a revolution begins with a step in the right direction. Inclusion seems to be in sight, if not within reach.

This issue looks at that contentious issue of inclusion: what does it mean? While it can be defined variously, it exists because its opposite, exclusion, does. What does it mean when one is included? Doesn't the very act of aspirational inclusion spawn an attitude of power and authority of one group over another? Through our features and columns, we try and understand what it means to be truly inclusive, and the possible ways to get there.

Our cover story is about community radio, and its relevance today, as a medium for broadcasting the voice of the excluded. Other stories explore various facets of inclusion: the disabled, the incarcerated, sexual and gender minorities, and the aged, for example. We take a look at how you can work toward inclusion in your own organization, and our debate presents different voices on the best way for corporates to integrate inclusion in their entire organization.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

Warm regards,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meera Rajagopalan".

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Managing Editor

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www.era.int
 - 2 Making Trade Work for the Environment, Prosperity and Resilience**
Geneva, Switzerland | Oct 2
UN Environment & World Trade Organization
www.greengrowthknowledge.org/event/making-trade-work-environment-prosperity-and-resilience
 - 3 Developing a good safeguarding practice**
8 All Saints Street, London, United Kingdom | Oct 2
Bond
www.bond.org.uk/learning/developing-good-safeguarding-practice
 - 4 Asia Water Forum 2018: Information, Innovation, and Technology**
ADB Headquarters, Manila, Philippines | Oct 2-4
Asian Development Bank
www.adb.org/news/events/asia-water-forum-2018-information-innovation-and-technology
 - 5 Sustainability Forum 2018**
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globalsustain.org/en/story/13307
 - 6 Funding for Development Conference 2018**
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<https://www.bond.org.uk/events/funding-for-development-2018>
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www.terrapinn.com/template/live/add2diary.aspx?e=9843
 - 8 Responsible Business Forum on Sustainable Development 2018**
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Global Initiatives
www.responsiblebusiness.com/forum/responsible-business-forum-sustainable-development-2018
 - 9 2018 Global Infrastructure Forum**
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Asian Development Bank
www.adb.org/news/events/2018-global-infrastructure-forum
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 - 11 International Conference on Innovational Challenges in Economics, Social Sciences, and Business**
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Research Publication and Innovation Centre Philippines
10times.com/iesbm
 - 12 World Circular Economy Forum 2018**
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International Institute for Sustainable Development
sdg.iisd.org/events/world-circular-economy-forum-2018
 - 13 Asia Clean Energy Summit 2018**
Sands Expo and Convention Centre Marina Bay Sands | Oct 31-Nov 2
Sustainable Energy Association of Singapore
asiacleanenergysummit.com
 - 14 Indonesia Infrastructure Week (Event Partner)**
Jakarta International Expo, Jakarta Indonesia | Oct 31-Nov 2
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www.indonesiainfrastructurereek.com
 - 15 IWA Regional Conference on Opportunities for Water Reuse in Southeast Asia**
Phuket, Thailand | Oct 31-Nov 2
Water Reuse Specialist Group
iwareusethailand2018.org



- 16 Law, Justice and Development Week 2018 - Rights, Protection and Development**
 DC, Washington | Nov 5-9
 World Bank Group
www.worldbank.org/en/events/2018/05/25/law-justice-and-development-week-2018-rights-protection-and-development
 - 17 Blockchain for Development: The Future Now**
 Liberty Technology Park, Cluj-Napoca, Romania | Nov 7
 DevelopmentAid
events.developmentaid.org/event/blockchain-for-development-the-future-now
 - 18 Sharing Cities Summit Barcelona 2018**
 Barcelona, Spain | Nov 12-15
 City Council of Barcelona and Open University of Catalonia (UOC Dimmons group)
www.share.barcelona
 - 19 Women's Forum Global Meeting 2018**
 Carrousel du Louvre, Paris, France | Nov 14-16
 Publicis Groupe Company
www.womens-forum.com
 - 20 AidEx 2018**
 Brussels, Belgium | Nov 14-15
 AidEx
www.aid-expo.com/brussels-event
 - 21 The Solar Show Sri Lanka 2018**
 Sri Lanka Exhibition & Convention Center, Colombo | Nov 20-21
 Terrapinn
www.energydigital.com/events/solar-show-sri-lanka-2018
 - 22 Disability Thematic Network Annual Meeting**
 Philanthropy House, Brussels, Belgium | Nov 20-21
 European Foundation Centre
www.efc.be/thematic_network/disability-thematic-network-dtn
 - 23 Green Growth and Sustainable Development Forum**
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Gender-Based Violence in H&M and Gap in Asia



Female workers in the Asian factories of clothing brands H&M and Gap are experiencing physical and sexual abuse, according to a report by trade unions, worker rights, and human rights organizations.


The report, conducted in nine garment production hubs in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia,

India, and Sri Lanka, finds that women in the factories experience violence and harassment including verbal abuse, coercion, low pay, and extreme working conditions such as forced overtime, caused by pressure for quick turnarounds and low overheads.

According to one worker in a factory in Sri Lanka, supervisors force

workers to work overnight without providing transport money. Some women in the same factory deal with sexual harassment such as machine operators touching or grabbing them. A worker in an H&M supplier factory in India complained of being pushed and kicked on the floor after not meeting the required target production.

The working conditions of women in said clothing brands sparked an outrage in the human rights community. After receiving the report, the International Labour Organization has set international labour standards and panel discussions to tackle gender-based violence in the workplace.

H&M and Gap spoke on the issue and vowed to investigate the accusations regarding the working conditions in their factories. However, the question of how to implement effective monitoring remains. 

Global Food Waste Could Increase by a Third: Study

A new report conducted by the Boston Consulting Group revealed that global food excess could rise by a third by 2030, with 2.1 billion tons of food wasted annually.

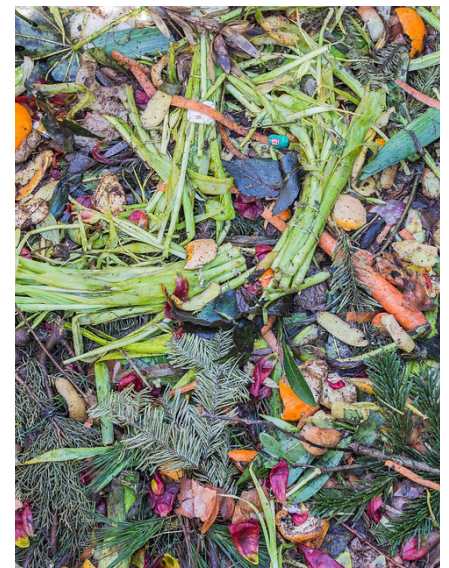
Currently, the world wastes 1.6 billion tons of food annually, a value of about \$1.2 trillion. According to Esben Hegnholt, one of the authors of the study, the world could lose \$1.5 trillion every year because of the food wastage by 2030.


This, in the context of food insecurity, with nearly 815 million, or 10.7% of the global population, suffering from chronic malnutrition, might be one the greatest paradoxes in the world today.

According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) food excess is responsible for 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

The study finds that Asia will experience a significant rise in food waste, as a result of its increasing population. Waste in developing countries, it was revealed, occurs during food production process, while waste in developed countries are brought about by retailers and consumers, who toss away food because of over purchase.

Several measures are being recommended to meet the 50% reduction rate in food excess by 2030—for instance, stronger government policies and better supply chain



efficiency. The report also suggests an “ecolabel” that would work like a fair-trade campaign, to encourage consumers to purchase goods from companies that have committed to reducing waste. 


WHO Introduces Experimental Treatments amid Ebola Outbreak



In response to the Ebola outbreak that hit the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the World Health Organization and local authorities of the country have started administering experimental treatments to affected patients to help contain the virus in the country's North Kivu province.

Five additional treatments were approved by the country's health authorities to help combat the outbreak: the mAb114 treatment, developed in the US using the antibodies of Ebola outbreak survivor in the western Congolese city of Kikwit in 1995; intravenous treatment ZMapp; Remdesivir, from U.S.-based biopharmaceutical company, Gilead Sciences; Regeneron Pharmaceuticals' Regn3450-471-3479; and the antiviral drug Favipiravir from Japan.

A total of 115 people were confirmed to have contracted Ebola since August 1. The virus, which causes a fatal haemorrhagic fever, is reportedly thriving in Congo's tropical forests and has taken an estimated 47 lives.

Armed conflict in the region renders treatment more challenging, especially in "red zones" of militia activity. A patient in the town of Beni was the first to receive the Remdesivir treatment for Ebola. Health officials reported the patient's stable condition, allaying fears with regard to the safety and efficacy of the experimental treatments. 


Half the World's Schools Have No Access to Proper WASH

There are 900 million students in the world, and about half of them lack access to clean water and hygiene services, according to a report by the World Health Organization.

Researchers of the study warned that lack of sanitation could put millions of children's health at risk, which would result in their missing school.

The report finds that over a third of schools lacked sufficient toilet services while almost half have no proper handwashing facilities. The study reveals that Sub-Saharan Africa, East and Southeast Asia have some of

the worst facilities. According to WHO, girls are more vulnerable to problems from lack of water and hygienic facilities. Their 2016 study revealed that 355 million girls went to their school without washing their hands after changing sanitary pads. Besides health risks such as dehydration and illness, girls who lack proper hygiene are more prone to stay at home rather than attend school.

In response to the sanitation crisis, the United Nations agreed to alleviate the problem as part of the 2030 Sustainable Goals. 

Women lead plastic clean-up in the Indian Himalayas


More than 4,000 women volunteers are spearheading a campaign against plastic waste in the Indian Himalayas, as part of an initiative organized by the Women's Alliance of Ladakh.

According to the U.N. Environment Programme, 5 trillion plastic bags are being used by the world annually. India produces 15,000 tons of plastic waste daily, and nearly half of it is being dumped in streets, landfills, and sewer systems. The growing issue of plastic waste in Ladakh, a mountainous tourist spot in India, spurred the women volunteers to action. In 2017, more than 277,000 tourists visited Leh, the largest town in the remote region of Ladakh, leaving behind a mountain of plastic waste clogged in sewers and streets.

Part of the Women's Alliance initiative focuses on reducing plastic



consumption, while helping local officials clean up the waste. One of their projects is lobbying for a nationwide plastic ban with cloth bags suggested as an alternative to plastic bags. In Ladakh, alliance volunteers, together with the local council and the police, inspect shops and markets up to three times a year to regulate plastic bag consumption.

Besides the Women's Alliance, several other organizations such as Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI) and Zero Waste Himalayas sent over 15,000 people to collect waste across the region. The waste was then segregated and sold to garbage collectors. 

A disability doesn't have to be a social barrier. Good etiquette begins with inclusion, not exclusion.

Robert M. Hensel

Guinness World Records holder for the longest non-stop wheelie in a wheelchair, covering a total distance of 6.178 miles. He was born with a birth defect, Spina bifida.

Diversity is being invited to the party; inclusion is being asked to dance.

Verna Myers

American author and inclusion expert in her speech at the Women's Leadership Forum, 2015.

Nurturing an inclusive culture begins in the family. Home is the first place to **foster openness and a culture of inclusion.**

Alain Dehaze

CEO of staffing firm The Addeco Group

Diversity, or the state of **being different**, isn't the same as inclusion. One is a description of what is, while the other describes a **style of interaction essential to effective teams and organizations.**

Bill Crawford
Psychologist

You have a responsibility to **make inclusion a daily thought**, so we can get rid of the word 'inclusion'.

Theodore Melfi

American screenwriter, film director and producer, 2015.

Gay rights can't only be won in the **courtrooms**—they have to be won in the **hearts and minds** of the people, too.

Prince Manvendra Singh Gohil

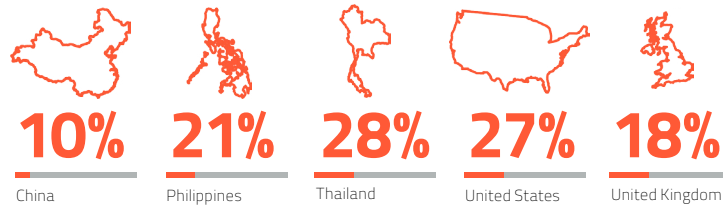
An Indian prince and the first openly gay prince in the world

My experience in living and working with **indigenous people** has given me the **hope** that I have—they have taught me concretely that **humans have the capacity to be marvelous, and not destructive.**

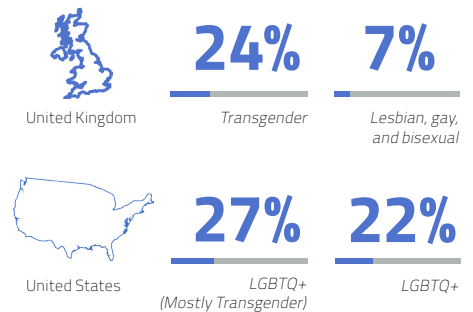
Juan Pablo Orrego
Chilean Ecologist, Musician,
and Environmentalist

LGBTQ+ at Work

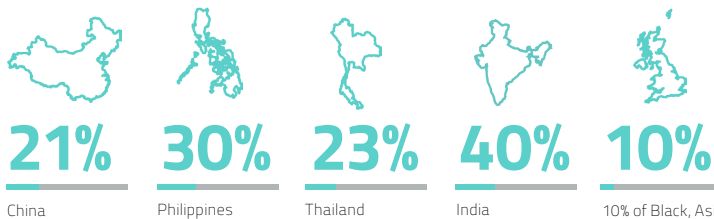
Believed they were denied a job because of their Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity or Expression (SOGIE)



Believed they were denied promotion or equal pay

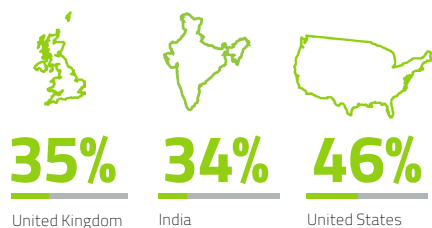


Experienced being harassed, discriminated, and bullied



10% of Black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBTQ+ in the UK.

Out of work because of fear of discrimination



Sources:
 LGBTI People and Employment: Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics in China, the Philippines and Thailand, United Nations Development Programme, 2018
 LGBT in Britain - Work Report, Stonewall, 2018
 2017 Workplace Equality Fact Sheet, Out and Equal, 2017
 The Indian LGBT Workplace Climate Survey 2016, Mission for Indian Gay & Lesbian Empowerment, 2016
 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Workplace Issues, Catalyst, 2018
 A Workplace Divided: Understanding the Climate for LGBTQ Workers Nationwide, Human Rights Campaign Foundation, 2018

Toys R Also Us: LGBTQ+

A kid-friendly shop splashed with rainbow-colored paint and glitzy stuffed animals opened in Chicago to promote gender inclusivity right from childhood.

Created by Claire Tibbs, the shop, Peach Fuzz, also aims to educate parents on how to raise LGBTQ+ kids through informative workshops. This includes art classes for protest-sign making and story circles with drag queens.

Playful and vibrant elements make up the shop, with emphasis on LGBTQ+-inspired motifs. Peach Fuzz takes pride in representation of all types of families—where toy sections are not gender-specific: Barbie dolls not just for girls, nor toy cars for boys. The shelves themselves are not gender-conforming.

Inspired by a children's section of a bookstore during a trip to Paris, Tibbs wanted to create a comfortable space for kids who want to be who they are. According to her, a transgender kid coming out should feel like a celebration and not a tragedy.


Besides inclusive toys, Peach Fuzz also offers a collection of books with stories on adoption, immigrant families, and a boy who likes to dress up all the time! 



Photo from: Peach Fuzz

Ready, Set, Play: Gaming for Everyone



Disabled gamer tries Xbox Adaptive Controller. Photo from: Xbox


According to a research conducted by the Accessibility Foundation in The Netherlands, 92% of people with disabilities play video games despite their condition. A clear call for inclusive game design.

Microsoft's Xbox Adaptive Controller is the tech giant's solution for accessibility in gaming. Dubbed XAC, the controller comprises a pair of gigantic programmable buttons, a directional pad and 19 ports that

can be plugged in by assistive accessories to aid physically disabled gamers.

The device features a USB port on either side of the controller, which allows users to operate a full-size joystick to emulate each thumbstick. The USB ports are compatible with advanced devices such as the Quadstick, a mouth-based controller for quadriplegic gamers. The XAC also has a large, flat base, which can be rested anywhere—on a desk, the user's lap, or even mounted on a wheelchair or an adjustable desk.

Accessibility is built into every element of the device, including the packaging, which consists of ribbons and levers, for easier access. What's more, the box is meant to be opened using one's teeth!

Microsoft's XAC is a product of its partnership with organizations that specialize in accessible gaming—for instance, Craig Hospital, SpecialEffect, The AbleGamers Charity, Warfighter Engaged, and The Cerebral Palsy Foundation. The device is scheduled to ship later this fall and will cost around \$100. 

Inclusion at Play

Gudgudee (“tickling” in Hindi) is a design firm that is transforming public spaces in India by creating innovative and inclusive play spaces for special and mainstream schools, public spaces, and residential communities.

Anjali Menon and Aditi Agrawal, alumni of the National Institute of Design, India, observed that social stigma and lack of playground equipment for children with special needs prevented them from playing outdoors. Gudgudee’s play spaces are designed using bright colours, pleasant sounds, and tactile games which balance education and fun, also enabling inclusive playing opportunities.

To improve hand-eye coordination for students with intellectual disabilities, Gudgudee designed a play space where there’s a hole in the wall that you have to poke a wooden peg through. To ensure such kids exercise their muscles enough, several spaces were created for them to crawl.

For visually impaired students, Gudgudee has created a playground with tactile elements like walls with different shapes and textures and a coloured wall where every colour is etched out in Braille. Telephone pipes and trampolines which make sounds when one jumps on them provide auditory experiences during play.


In collaboration with Playground Ideas, a global community of playground builders, Gudgudee is designing 50 playgrounds across India using low-cost recycled materials. 



Photo from: www.gudgudee.in

Go Fish!



Photo from: www.luckyironfish.com

Lucky Iron Fish is a Canadian social enterprise that helps add a magic ingredient in people’s cooking pots: iron. Born in 2012 out of a research project by Dr. Christopher Charles when he travelled to Cambodia, Lucky Iron Fish was designed as a solution to the high rate of anaemia he observed. Through local partners, the organization has so far distributed 28,255 Lucky Iron Fish. The fish is retailed on their website, and each purchase on their website puts a Lucky Iron Fish in the pots of the people who need it most as well. The organization has projects underway in Peru, India, Guatemala, Tanzania, and Benin, and is looking for partners to distribute the fish. Now there’s an ironclad case for health! 

Help is Always at Hand




Photo from: www.andhand-project.com

When Takizawa Keita's wife was pregnant, she often had trouble finding seating in Tokyo's public transport. It wasn't rudeness: people just didn't know she was there, because they were looking down at their cellphones! Keita devised a simple solution that, like a vaccine, used the self-same smartphone, to alert people of emergencies or people in need.

The idea is simple, and similar to several emergency applications in use: a person who wants help presses a button and registered users within range are notified through their smartphones. The user can then respond to the call for help. In this case, it was pregnant women, during the trials and initial research phases.

The utility of the application has now expanded beyond pregnant women, to encompass all those who might need help: tourists who are lost, senior citizens, people with physical disabilities, etc. A pilot was conducted in a Tokyo subway station in the month of August, in association with JR West, Dai Nippon Printing and Mirairo. VoIP application Link is the backbone of the project.

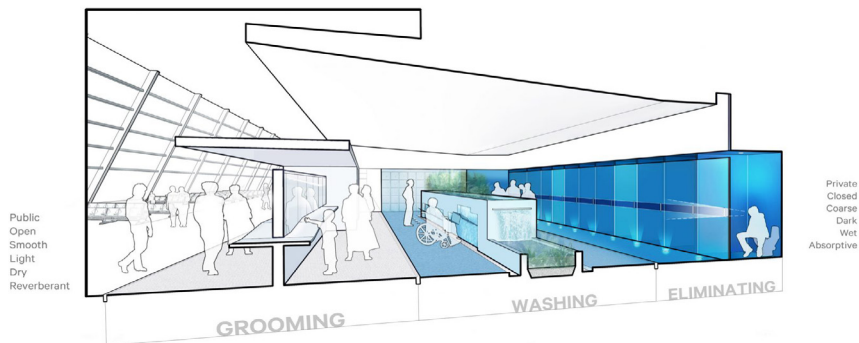
If successful, plans are on to finalize the launch of the project with specific applications. 

Freeing Labels on Comfort

An open source website aimed at promoting guidelines for inclusive restroom design research was launched in response to the controversy surrounding transgender persons' access to single-sex public restrooms in the United States.


Under the name Stalled! Online, the website houses cost-effective restroom prototypes that can be adopted and installed across the country. The inclusive design caters not only to transgender people, but also people with both physical and intellectual disabilities, breastfeeding mothers, and individuals who need to perform religious rites.

Some of the design prototypes published consist of a multi-user



Sample of inclusive bathroom design. Photo from: Stalled! Online

facility and an airport restroom that includes a semi-open agora-like division that is separated into three parallel activity zones, dedicated to grooming, washing and eliminating.

The models are accessible through the website and can be utilized for use in universities, business establishments as well as public spaces. Gallaudet University, a school for the deaf in Washington, D.C., has used one of Stalled's designs, which converts standard single-sex restrooms into an inclusive multi-user facility. 



Indigenous People's Rights Mandatory in SDG Discourse



Dusun community members in Upper Moyog river feeding the fish managed under the Tagal system. Photo from: PACOS Trust

As countries try and race toward the SDGs, the rights of indigenous peoples are dangerously falling by the wayside, in spite of their being knowledge storehouses of sustainable life practices, write Gan Shimray and Jo Ann L. Guillao, of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact.

In 2015, world leaders adopted the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development with the pledge to “leave no one behind”. The agenda comprises 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 related targets with 232 global indicators.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the pledge, “Leave no one behind” represents an ambitious vision for the future where it entails a transformative agenda that requires changes at all levels, to ensure that it will be a reality for all countries and for all peoples. The precursor to the 2030 Agenda, the Millennium Development Goals, while making great strides, failed to close the gap between indigenous peoples and non-indigenous peoples. For example, the ethnic

minority (indigenous peoples) in Vietnam constitutes 14% of the country's population but 56% of the country's poor households. The average income among indigenous peoples is only 16% of the average income of the general population in Vietnam (IWGIA 2016).

While the idea of “inclusion” and the call of “Nothing about us without us”, has its roots in the Apartheid and HIV movements, they also resonate in the indigenous communities' demand for inclusion. A sense of inclusion rooted in equality, social justice and respect for diversity. This means, as explained by the Major Group for Indigenous Peoples (IPMG), respecting subsistence economies and promoting non-monetary measures of well-being. For instance, the financial



A vibrant forest in Hin Lad Nai as a result of Karen's collective knowledge systems. Photo from: Gam Shimray

Across countries, indigenous communities are experiencing pushbacks, rather than inclusion, with increasing attacks on communities defending their land and resources.

measure of \$1.25/day for extreme poverty is not applicable to indigenous peoples. For indigenous peoples, poverty eradication means security of rights to lands, territories and resources.

The inclusion of indigenous peoples is once again susceptible to risks of being excluded in the process and outcome. Across the countries, indigenous peoples are facing continuous challenges with regard to inclusion and one fundamental right that is often challenged, if not violated, is their right to self-determination as embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. By virtue of this right, indigenous peoples can have the freedom to determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. Self-determination implies the right to participate in the

democratic process of governance and to influence one's future—politically, socially, and culturally.

So far, not much has happened. Governments appear to be reluctant to embrace a human rights-based approach to SDGs which, in some sense, is already threatening the inclusion of indigenous communities in the process. Across countries, indigenous communities are experiencing pushbacks, rather than inclusion, with increasing attacks on communities defending their land and resources.

However the SDGs were designed, the day-to-day realities in indigenous communities must continue to be addressed directly and a systemic change must take place. Indigenous peoples cannot afford to be spectators of change and development. It has already been proven that when indigenous peoples are in control of their land, forest cover is sustained and biodiversity flourishes. Most of



The benefits of the Tagal system evidenced by the increased number of fish.
Photo from: PACOS Trust

the world's natural resources (both bio and mineral resources) are in indigenous peoples' territories. About 80% of the forests and 60% of the world's biodiversity are in indigenous lands and territories, which makes their role crucial in the development discourse. There are several success stories that illustrate this, but two are worth talking about.

THAILAND: One inspiring story of restoration of environmental destruction and self-sufficient economy through cultural revival is the case of the Karen people in Huay Hin Lad Nai. The community, located in the northern part of Thailand, managed to transform their forests and economy, both completely by a logging company, into an evergreen forest and self-sufficient village economy.

Despite initial conflicts with the government, the community is now recognized as a self-sufficient model-village in Thailand and has won several local and international prizes. Their credo: "If we take care of the forest, the forest will take care of us".

MALAYSIA: To address the urgent problems of depleting freshwater fishery resources, the Sabah State Government and the Department of Fisheries (DOF) took inspiration from indigenous communities and their traditional resource management of rivers, called the "Tagal System." This gave rise to the highly successful Community-Based Fishery Resources Management (CBRM).

The Tagal System is a model of co-management that evolved out of a strong partnership between the

government and the communities, and has now spread to several hundreds of rivers and communities in Sabah, Malaysia. The success of this conservation initiative has also given rise to tourist attraction areas.

The stories above clearly show significant impacts and progress of development when indigenous peoples are engaged. Achieving development for all is no easy task but it should at least start with a strong will by the governments to work with indigenous peoples, decolonize laws, policies and operational practices and to ensure that inclusion of indigenous peoples is rooted in the recognition of rights. But even that is not enough. There is a need for interventions that mitigate the gap of inequality, social injustices, and conflicts. There is a need to overcome systemic barriers that will include those furthest behind. **i**



Gam Shimray (Top photo) (Naga from Northeast India) is the secretary-general of the Asia Indigenous People's Pact, and follows the progress of the SDGs.

Jo Ann L. Guillao (Kan-kanaey from Philippines), executive secretary of AIPP, is involved with climate change-related research.



OUT-OF-THE-BOX THINKING:

Improved technology is bringing connectivity to remote regions of India

By Meera Rajagopalan

Deployment of Internet in a Box.
All photos from: DEF

It looks like an alien: a cephalopod-like creature on three legs, its four eyes seemingly transmitting messages all around, its elongated head processing all the information.

The description is not too far from the truth, for the contraption is the “Internet in a Box”, the latest offering from the India-based Digital Empowerment Foundation stable, which brings the internet to areas of no connectivity in India. Internet in a Box comes fitted in a box with pre-fabricated parts, including a camera tripod and requisite PVC pipes, besides other accessories like ethernet cables, connectors, routers, and antenna. It’s solar-powered, and its visual user guide enables anyone to assemble it. Its ring-based assembly system further eases the setting up of the “tower”. It has a

range of 4 kilometres (2.5 miles).

The Internet in a Box is an effort to bring digital connectivity to rural India, which is woefully unconnected at a time when it requires the internet to access services, rues Osama Manzar, founder and director of DEF.

“It is the state of affairs that we may not be able to access the internet, but our lives are dependent on digital citizenship or identity,” says Manzar, whose DEF has been working toward digital empowerment for unreached communities of India since 2002.

In India, while the metros and towns are well-connected by private telecom companies, they do not

cover the entire country, because of concerns of Return on Investment. The government has undertaken a grand project of wiring entire India, through subsidized projects, but progress is slow, erratic, and unreliable. Even as the government claims that more than 114,000 gram panchayats (out of a total of 250,000) are service-ready, DEF data shows that requisite equipment has only reached 18.5% of the panchayats, and functional internet is available in only 11% of the panchayats.

While those were practical problems surrounding universal connectivity, DEF set about building on its experience of having created 191 village-level Community Information Resource Centres (CIRCs) across India. CIRCs are infrastructure hubs complete with gadgets and other digital tools. The hub is often supported

by the wireless mesh technology in the absence of a mainstream ISP. These CIRC's are run by young people from the community, who use the opportunity to empower their communities while also building a sustainable business with the digital services provided.

While the CIRC is a brick-and-mortar space for the community to come together to access digital services and much more, DEF's plan was more ambitious: to provide internet connectivity and digital services to far-flung areas without the need to invest in infrastructure.

After the Zero Connect initiative, which brought the internet to the remote area of the Little Rann of Kutch and its Agariyas, Internet in a Box was conceptualized as the scale-up solution.

"The idea is to develop this solution as a rural youth social enterprise," says Udit Chaturvedi, Deputy Manager (Communication & Media), DEF. "So if you want a connection to the internet, you can pay for the time used. We are trying out the technology on a test basis as of now."

Internet in a Box is being piloted in two places: Anantpur, Andhra Pradesh and Tain, Haryana. It will also be deployed in another DEF



Testing of Internet in a Box.

project: Smartpur, a project to develop 500 smart villages in five years, implemented with support from Nokia. Smartpur works on a hub-and-spoke model, with the hub housing services along six areas of digital development: education, health, governance, finance, entertainment and livelihoods. The spokes will spread the services around the villages surrounding the hub, by using an Internet-in-a-Box set up.

This is an example of social entrepreneurs innovating using low-cost solutions even as complex and gargantuan government machinery moves toward universal connectivity.

Not only is the service useful for remote areas, it can also be used

in urban areas where there is low connectivity. "It is very relevant to small countries as well, especially urban areas with weak spots," says Manzar.

The organization has plans to spread the solution internationally, and a training program on the solution was recently held with representative and social change makers from South East Asian countries. 

“It is the state of affairs that we may not be able to access the internet, but our lives are dependent on digital citizenship or identity.”

Osama Manzar
 Founder/Director,
 Digital Empowerment
 Foundation



Unboxing of Internet in a Box.



Don't Hire PwDs Out Of Sympathy: Meera Shenoy, Founder, Youth4Jobs

The World Bank estimates that 15% of the world's population live with one disability or the other, and that India is home to about 8 crore (80 million) of them. Nearly 70% of India's disabled live in villages, and even if inclusion efforts are increasing across the globe, the trickle-down effect to youth in villages in the Global South is negligible.

In this scenario, Meera Shenoy's Indian NGO, Youth4Jobs, has an enviable record: around 12,500 youth trained for jobs, with 65% of them placed in jobs with the organized sector, 15% in local organizations, and the rest attempt a job in the government. Youth4Jobs creates this transformation through two-month programs in 32 residential training centres in 14 states of India, many of them in smaller cities, which provides unique advantage to the youth.

"You know, the kids who come to us [for training], their self-esteem is negative. In the rural areas, people still don't call them by their name, but by their disability. We have to take this nameless person with low confidence, figure him/her out, and complete the transformation in two months' time," says Shenoy.



Meera Shenoy, Founder, Youth4Jobs

“ We have to take this nameless person with low confidence, figure him/her out, and complete the transformation in two months’ time.”

Training and placement, however, is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of the organization’s work. The NGO has worked with 500 companies, of which nearly 200 were first-time hirers of PwDs. With companies, Youth4Jobs works at various levels (see box). It also works with colleges, and recently, the organization has also moved to empower schoolchildren with disabilities. Youth4Jobs was recently awarded the Best Placement Agency at the National Awards for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) 2017.

It was but natural that when Shenoy started a non-profit, it would be in the field of skilling. After all, she had worked on one of India’s first skilling initiatives: as executive director of Employment Generation and Marketing Mission, India’s first state government skilling mission (an initiative of Andhra Pradesh state). Shenoy also worked with the World Bank on their skilling strategy for a couple of states in India, and then, with S. Ramadorai, then chairman of the National Skill Development Agency of India, supported by UNDP.

With large projects under her belt, Shenoy’s work always had an eye on scale. Today, the organization is on the verge of expansion to other countries.

In a chat with iMPACT, Shenoy talks about Youth4Jobs and its work, and the ecosystem of inclusive hiring.

iMPACT: How did Youth4Jobs happen?

Meera Shenoy: We always knew the area we wanted to work in. Nearly

80% of the world’s disabled are in developing countries like India. For us (the founders), working at scale was important. We knew that if we are able to scale in India, it means that we will be a global player and that is exactly what has happened. The other aspect is that the connection between poverty and disability is really distinct. So if you’ve left your corporate job for poverty alleviation, as we all did, nothing can be better for you than to work in the field of disability. We made several clear choices at the beginning. The first choice was that we will work with rural youth with disabilities in unreached villages because again, if we’ve left our corporate jobs for the social sector, we didn’t want to look at the low hanging fruit, but where India needs us.

How has the journey of Youth4Jobs been?

We faced several challenges. The first was sourcing the youth to train. If you visit a village, there might be many youths who need jobs, but not necessarily disabled youth. And where we found them, sometimes, we saw that the parents themselves thought that the youth was good for nothing. They didn’t want to let go of them, because of government stipend, pension, and the various schemes. We realized we have to do major advocacy at the village level to sensitize them. The second problem we had was getting adequate trainers. For example, when we needed sign language instructors, we could not get them, because the best of them leave the country for better

prospects. The third, of course, was that companies were ignorant about disability. It was not a bad attitude, but simple ignorance because most PwDs they had seen on the streets were beggars. We realized that if we really want to start a job-linked program, we have to close the gaps at different ends. Our strength is that we work with one eye on youth with disabilities and the other eye on the market. So, when we see a gap in the market, we quickly add a service, which has helped us become a one-stop shop for companies.

Has there been an increase in awareness today, in terms of inclusive hiring?

Yes, certainly. Many MNCs have inclusion and diversity as an agenda, and at some point of time, they want to create and work on a policy toward the same. Another category of organizations are ones who looked at the area of gender within inclusion, and now, say after five years of gender, they want to now look at disability. There are also companies who are looking for solutions for their problems, such as huge attrition rates. They are looking for an alternative trained labour force, where PwDs can make a huge contribution. The recent legislation in India (Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016) is in line with the UNCRPWD (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities). If the government actively disseminates the provisions of the act, it will definitely elicit more activity on this front.



Indian Sign Language Workshop by Y4J at Google India, Hyderabad. All photos from: Youth4Jobs

Do you see tokenism in inclusive hiring, especially with regard to disability?


Yes, sometimes. Eventually, the organization should buy into it, rather than just say, “OK, let me hire so many people.” To really be an equal opportunity employer and walk your talk, some steps have to be taken at all levels. It is not enough if the HR person is on board, the business heads also have to come on board, because that’s the main way in which disability gets mainstreamed. One of the things we always tell the corporates is this: Don’t hire them out of sympathy or empathy but because it helps your business.

Apart from companies, what other areas do you work in?

With our new “College Connect” program, we reach colleges. Companies are working together with us to co-create curricula at the college level. We also help colleges with admissions of youth with disabilities,

because colleges typically don’t understand the space. If we really want to open the minds of the industry, we need to work on their knowledge, so we worked on a series of knowledge products as well, including a document called “The Road to Inclusion” in association with the Boston Consulting Group. A new area which is opening up for us is companies in the service sector who want to ensure customers with disabilities (this includes the elderly) have a barrier-free experience.

What are the three things that must happen today if equitable employment for the disabled were to happen tomorrow?

One, work on changing attitudes towards disability must begin at the school level itself. Two, advocacy programs in workplaces must be strengthened, reiterating the “We Can” message. Three, in India, the implications of the Right to PwD Act 2016 and the Disability Law 2017 for private and public sector must be disseminated. 

“We realized that if we really want to start a job-linked program, we have to close the gaps at different ends.”

How does Youth4Jobs work with companies?



Y4J Jaipur AirrToast.

Opening new job roles for PwDs

Looking at customer-facing roles available in large numbers in emerging market, and suggest PwDs take up that job role.

Example: Silent cashiers in retail chain. This model, piloted by the Landmark Group in Chennai, has become an industry-wide phenomenon. Customer survey showed preference for silent cashiers.



Sensitization workshop at IKEA

Sensitization workshops

Opening people's minds to the possibility.

Example: Blindfolding participants and asking them to thread a needle. When you have a limitation, you will discover solutions; you will start innovating.



Y4J Youth at McDonalds.

Complete on-boarding of PwDs in a job role

Providing workplace readiness and training for employees.

Example: Chennai-based automotive parts manufacturer Valeo onboarded disabled youth. Increase in efficiency demonstrated.



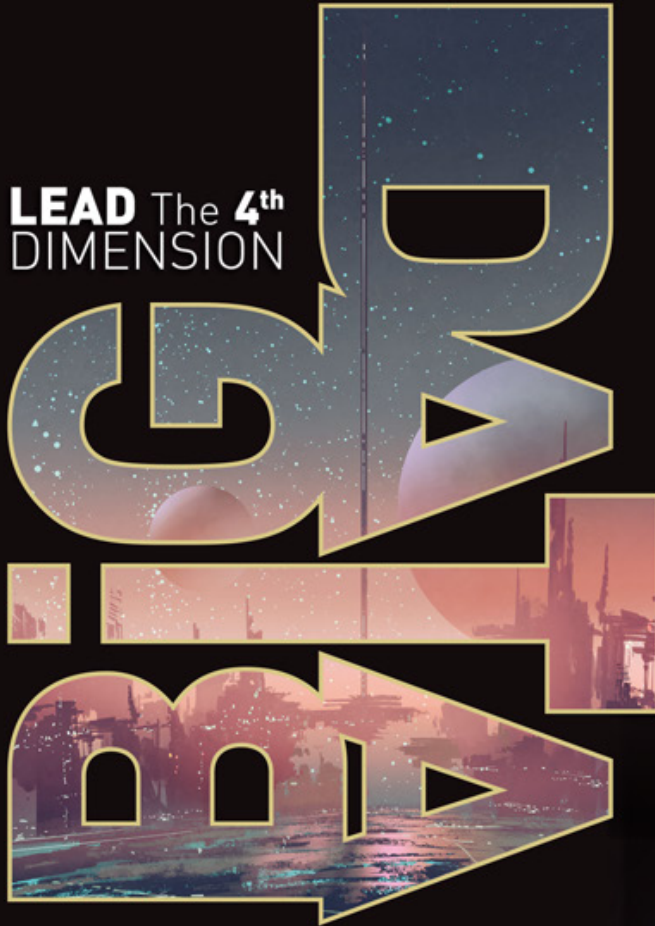
Photo from: Unsplash.com

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The ABCDs of Inclusion

We've all heard **about inclusion and vow to do the right thing**. Often, though, we are stumped by some of the vocabulary. Here are a **few terms** that have been gaining popularity recently, just so you're up to speed.



Ally

A person (usually heterosexual) who is a supporter or advocate of LGBTQ rights.



Color Blindness

A racial ideology where putting an end to discrimination can be achieved by treating individuals as equally as possible, by ignoring their race, culture, gender or ethnicity.



Digital Divide

The gap in access to information and communications technology (ICT) between individuals.



Demisexual

A person who doesn't develop sexual attraction to anyone until they have established a strong emotional connection.



Heteronormativity

Cultural bias where heterosexuality is considered the norm. An example of this is meeting someone and automatically assuming that he/she is straight.



Non-disabled

The preferred term to call people who do not have a disability. Previous terms include "normal" or "healthy" which is discriminatory and offensive to PwDs.



Poz

A person who is HIV-positive.



Reverse Racism

Type of discrimination against a dominant group or political majority.




Seasonal Occupation

The process when Indigenous People move to different areas in search of resources such as food. Previously called "Nomadism" but the term may point to IPs who do not have permanent residence, hence roaming around in search for home.



Stealth

A transgender person who has already physically transitioned to the gender of their choice but who chooses not to reveal his/her identity to family, friends, or colleagues. 



The Sound of Communities

It is time for community radio to take stock and adapt to new technologies with the concepts of both community and media in flux.

By Meera Rajagopalan

We are greeted by the rhythmic clickety-clack of the loom when we enter PPM Nagar in Dindigul, India, one of the colonies where Sourashtrans, a predominantly weaving community, live. Among the residents are M.R. Kesavan and his father, M.V. Raghupathy. The pride of place in their home is given to the two looms, which stand opposite each other like defiant chessboard pieces. As Kesavan works the loom, a radio behind him belts out movie tunes from the eighties. Kesavan quickly adjusts the rhythm of his loom to match that of the song on the radio.

What his family listens to, primarily, is a station called Pasumai FM, one of the 238 community radio stations in India. Kesavan is one of the model listeners of community radio, often calling in to the station, suggesting new programs and formats, and actively participating in off-air events as well.

For Kesavan's father, the noteworthy program is the half hour for weavers, which includes tips and tricks to work more efficiently, and all in their own Saurashtran language, which is slowly being erased from the community.

However, the Kesavan family feels like an anomaly. In houses around theirs, television sets are turned on instead, and many have not heard of Pasumai FM. Kesavan, however, remains steadfast in his support for the station. "It's like our own station," he says, reflecting the core of community radio.

This, the idea of feeling included and part of media creation, rather than mere consumption, is what distinguishes community radio from others.

In Gurgaon, tune in to 107.8 FM, and you will be among more than 20,000 people who count themselves as Gurgaon Ki Awaaz listeners. There is one crucial difference, though: while Gurgaon Ki Awaaz also broadcasts online, Pasumai FM does not. Pasumai FM is run by Paul Bhaskar's Peace Trust, which runs a vocational training college and several livelihood programs, and Gurgaon Ki Awaaz, by The Restoring Force, an NGO.

Programming in both stations is a mixed bag—some music, folk and film; discussions on health and career; programming for farmers, women, and students; call-in programs with an expert in the studio; and some programs specific to the community, such as the Saurashtran weavers' program.

Some community radio stations also take up disaster surveillance and response roles, like Indonesian stations around Mount Merapi, many of which report volcanic activity on a regular basis. Community radio stations could also be special interest stations, without a development focus: one of the earliest community radio stations in England was by Indian immigrants, mostly belting out Bollywood numbers.



Weaving family listening to Pasumai FM
Photo from: Meera Rajagopalan



Pasumai FM talking to schoolchildren
Photo from: Meera Rajagopalan

“Most young people don't even know there is a device called a radio—for many of them, it's just an app on their phone, so we must try and see how best to leverage these technologies, but there's still so much to be done on the content and programming.”

R. Sreedher
Indian community radio practitioner and
pioneer of community radio

Conversations surrounding community radio often veer toward its imminent demise in the face of ICTs (Internet and Communication Technologies) and social media, both extremely participatory media.

Why would anyone want to go through all that trouble when you can simply form a closed group and communicate? Why would you want a license when you can simply start a YouTube channel, the arguments go.

Not so fast, cautions Osama Manzar, who runs India-based Digital Empowerment Foundation, and is on the community radio licensing committee in India. “Considering the internet has not reached rural areas, I feel that it is still very relevant in a country like India,” he says.

His opinion is echoed by many, including station director Widodo Edi Purwoko, who runs Gemi Nastiti in Indonesia, where community radio is part of the country’s culture. “The existence of YouTube, Facebook, Instagram does not affect the role of community radio and can even help the progress of community radio. Internet network dependence on social media cannot spread information more quickly to the community especially in rural and mountainous areas,” he says.

At least in areas where connectivity is good, stations are moving toward a blend of radio and web radio, as in the case of Gurgaon Ki Awaaz. Not only does it multiply the number of listeners, it also provides the flexibility to listen to it when they want to.

R. Sreedher, Indian community radio practitioner, and pioneer of community radio, says that the mode of access is not as important as the content itself. “Most young people don’t even know there is a device called a radio—for many of them, it’s just an app on their phone,” he says. “So we must try and see how best to leverage these technologies, but there’s still so much to be done on the content and programming.”

The question itself is flawed, says Suman Basnet, regional coordinator of AMARC Asia-Pacific, the international association of community radio practitioners. The move to an internet-based radio might be inevitable, but it is irrelevant, he says, adding that the basic problem in community radio is that it is still thought of as radio, while the emphasis should be on the community. The famous aphorism goes that community radio is 90% community and 10% radio. That, Basnet says, is skewed today.

Mining Information: Bolivia’s Community Radio Pioneers

Bolivia’s miner radio stations are, even today, the gold standard when it comes to the model for community radio. These stations, the first of which started operations in 1949, were essentially trade union radio stations, which were meant to inform mining communities and more importantly, organize workers’ resistance.

During the 1960s and 70s, more of these stations appeared on the Bolivian landscape, providing a strong community radio during times of peace and a force to contend with during times of crisis: authoritarian government action or mine closures.

The stations once numbered 26, and



For representational purposes. Photo from: Northernminer.com

were each financed by the miners themselves, who paid a small monthly fee to keep it going. It was sustainable because it was considered part of the community. When the mines started closing in the 1980s, the mining community scattered, and many of them closed down too.

Now, with the leftist Evo Morales as president, community radio has made a comeback, with over 300 radio stations broadcasting all over the country.



CR Hamro operating from the fields. Photo from: Gemi Nastiti

The Prelude

The seeds of today’s community radio were sown in the miner’s radio stations in Bolivia in the late 1940s (see box), and in Columbia’s Radio Sutatenza, started for the peasants of the country by a swashbuckling priest. Eventually, they would typify the two streams or schools of thought of community radio: one, participatory radio by and for the community, and the other, radio with a clear development focus.

The origin of community radio has its definite roots as an anti-establishment, rights-based medium, which has been somewhat tempered by the medium’s growth in various countries, depending on the need and other geopolitical factors.

Being as loose a term as “community radio” has meant that, like the six blind men, people and countries have interpreted the term differently.

The Interpretation

The Indian experiment has likely been the most complex, with its growth impeded by elaborate licensing and

programming requirements. The number of operational stations in India stands at 238 (as of 23 August 2018), up from 143 in 2013. Being a medium that can potentially reach the unreachable, it has also found interest within political and religious organizations, a violation of the letter and spirit of the guidelines, according to a 2016 study by Devi Leena Bose and Anushi Agrawal.

Across the seas, Indonesia presents a different picture. With an estimated 4,000 community radio stations, it seems like a healthy ecosystem. However, one has to look deeper to find that not all of them have the requisite license. Many communities simply use the free frequency and transmit on their own until a government official shows up.

Mujianto is the director of MMC Radio, in Boyolali, an area east of Jakarta. He says that the reason Indonesia has so many stations is the razor-sharp focus on community. “Because of the principle of from, by, for, and about the community,

Indonesia has so many thriving stations,” he says.

While the hilly country of Nepal has given rise to community radio that is largely commercial, and controlled by senior journalists, community radio in Australia and North America has mostly meant special interest groups—say, a community radio for jazz lovers. South African community radio emerged from the shadows of apartheid, and in Thailand, its growth has been stymied by government crackdown.

Purwoko says that community radio in Indonesia is much closer and tighter woven to the community than any other media. “Community radio is able to present information according to the needs of the community without the influence of elements such as politics, and a culture that is not in accordance with the culture of the community,” he says.

Community radio has never been monolithic, perhaps for the reason that community, in itself, has never been.

The Arrangement

No matter what model of community radio you subscribe to, independently sustaining a community radio station is one of the major problems of the medium. The most ideal situation, of course, is for the community to fund the station. That's hardly practiced, which also brings to sharp focus the actual community that supports the station.

UNESCO has been a staunch supporter of community media and has financed and supported a slew of stations in Africa and Asia. However, that raises questions about the true nature of the stations themselves. "UNESCO and UNDP are promoting community radio, but to what end? Are they setting the agenda at some level?" asks Sreedher.

Basnet says that although community radio started off with a rights and development focus, many a time, seemingly well-meaning "development" initiatives take over or co-opt the rights agenda. This usually happens when a station is dependent, for its survival, on out-of-community donors such as NGOs, INGOs, or government agencies and depends less on community-based resources.

Sreedher says it should not, ideally, be that difficult to sustain a radio station, for the simple equipment needed to start a CR station can cost as low as \$15,000, with over 75% subsidized by governments (in the case of a country like India). With



CR Dhading operating from a tent. Photo from: Gemi Nastiti



Pasumai FM on the field at a school in Dindigul. Photo from: Meera Rajagopalan

salaries and honorariums, he calculates the monthly expenses at around \$150.

Local support and buy-in seems to be the best way to maintain a sustainable radio station. For instance, Radio Namaskar, broadcast from Konark in — India, runs entirely on volunteers, and ads from local businesses. Pasumai FM has a 15-member committee that includes local businesses, weavers, students, and farmers. "We hard-sell the ads, yes, but that has helped us always fill the maximum limit of 5 mins of ads per hour," Bhaskar says. The Bolivian miners had, for instance, completely funded their radio stations.

If it's true community radio, the community will take care of the station, says Basnet. "Old heritage sites survived as long as people saw value in them. Unless community radio is thought of as part of community heritage, it will not be sustainable both content-wise and financially," he says.

The Audience

While some practitioners insist that listenership for community radio has not decreased, others agree that the threat from television, the internet, and the smartphone has eaten into prospective listeners of the traditional community radio station. However, Asia still retains its strong oral tradition roots, which might work in favour of community radio.

Sreedher suggests looking at it differently—focusing on people who depend on radio while working or travelling, like the family of Kesavan, the weaver from Dindigul. He also advocates a change in the program mix. “No one is interested in what is called ‘development communication’ anymore,” he says. “People want information that is directly useful to them. Content should be carefully produced.”

Basnet also foresees growth in non-traditional definitions of community, like diasporic communities. “If you stick to your

own traditional ways, you will start losing listeners,” he cautions.

Even with decreasing listenership and an impending financial crunch, community radio still remains one of the best ways to get people’s voices heard. Examples from all over the world attest to its utility: from disaster management systems to keeping an eye on society, from acting as a local market for goods and services to sharing knowledge on trade and livelihood.

The Cadence

The expectation is that technology will not just make running community radio cheaper, it will also enable a multiplication of listenership and thereby, advertisements and sustainability. Radio Namaskar, for instance, has plans to start Namaskar TV, and many more stations are wondering how they can plug into the internet landscape without losing their individuality.

The technology is bound to change, agrees Kapil Dhadech,

operations and delivery manager at Onion Development Technologies (formerly known as Graamvani), an organization that provides automation tools especially to community radio stations. “Community radio is certainly moving toward web radio and community TV,” he says.

“There will be more convergence between the internet, telephony platforms, and community radio,” says Basnet. “The survival of community radio hinges on how efficiently traditional systems can converge with technology.”

The larger signs are there: UNESCO, for instance, has changed the nomenclature from community radio to community media, to encompass a wide range of media.

Pasumai FM’s Bhaskar says that the future of community radio will look very different. “But what form that will take, we don’t quite know yet. Perhaps the way forward is web radio.” He pauses. “But if that grows, maybe the government will regulate that too.”



Radio Sindhu. Photo from: Gemi Nastiti

“The survival of community radio hinges on how efficiently traditional systems can converge with technology.”

Suman Basnet

Regional coordinator of AMARC Asia-Pacific, the international association of community radio practitioners



Fertile Ground in Asia for Innovative Digital Inclusion Solutions

While the digital economy is brimming with new opportunities, its benefits are still elusive for many. Many parts of Asia have a rich foundation of entrepreneurship, because of which there are interesting prospects to develop digital solutions to tackle challenges and fill access gaps, says John Garrity.



John Garrity is a Senior Connectivity Advisor for Digital Inclusion within the Center for Digital Development in the U.S. Global Development Lab and leads on USAID's operations on extending Internet access and adoption through policy engagement and program management.

The digital economy is poised for unparalleled growth in Asia with great opportunities for social impact investors to play an expanded role in spurring digitally-enabled social development. A string of recent reports highlight this, with one International Data Corporation (IDC) study forecasting that a whopping 60% of Asia-Pacific's GDP will come from digital products and services, as early as 2021. This boom isn't limited to a select few economies, and countries including Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam are considered prime for growth and attractive for investors.

As the enthusiasm for these services grows, it is important to remember that all the digital services and products trending now ride on top of mobile networks and internet services. Therefore, to be profitable and achieve social impact, sound connectivity infrastructure is crucial.

Complete digital inclusion is a long way to go, however. In

some parts of Asia with remote islands or high percentages of rural populations, challenges of basic infrastructure remain. Conversely, some of the mega-cities in the region with high concentrations of informal slum settlements have adequate, available voice and data communication, but services remain prohibitively expensive. Basic literacy, let alone digital literacy, continues to be a challenge, and for some countries, particularly in South Asia, cultural and social norms prevent women from equal access to information, widening the digital gender divide.

Mobile network operators face significant challenges and few incentives to expand their coverage to these unconnected populations – network economics simply don't allow for profit in these sparsely populated and price-sensitive markets under the business-as-usual operator model. Densely populated urban centres with lower costs and millions of data-guzzling users with smartphones are



All photos from: USAID

A growing number of innovative connectivity enterprises and community networks are seizing this opportunity, by taking advantage of improved technologies, in particular solar, and locally trained technicians and agents, to drastically reduce costs.

typically more attractive for both the operators and their shareholders.


Tapping into these hard-to-reach markets, while continuing to be challenging, offers a set of opportunities for new entrepreneurs and businesses with alternative solutions. A growing number of innovative connectivity enterprises and community networks are seizing this opportunity, by taking advantage of improved technologies, in particular solar, and locally trained technicians and agents, to drastically reduce costs. Many are also developing additional revenue streams through value-added services, from digital payments to phone charging, and a diverse set of sponsorships, including advertisers, content providers and fast-moving consumer goods brands, thereby driving inclusive growth.

Fostering agency at the local level is crucial and entails empowering individuals and communities to be able to fully understand the opportunities and downside risks associated with communications technologies, and be able to self-determine how best to take leverage of technologies for their own intended outcomes. For both infrastructure and content, local agency is imperative to foster network access, particularly for the underserved. Part of the solution therefore, would be to develop the necessary digital skills for local entrepreneurship to make full use of online platforms for business, as well as creating an ecosystem to be able to support new products and services. The great part is that Asia already is endowed with a culture of entrepreneurship with very interesting examples of businesses,

especially in areas that are remote or have limited access. So, the ground here is fertile for digital infrastructure development and the creation of applications and services, and part of our role at the USAID Last Mile Initiative is to help fill gaps and ensure the right building blocks are in place.

At USAID, the Digital Inclusion team tackles the full range of these barriers by co-investing in extending access, providing technical assistance to governments in the development of national broadband plans and establishing universal service funds, and developing programs to tackle demand side issues such as digital literacy and closing the digital gender divide, through initiatives such as the WomenConnect Challenge. Through the initiative, we're working to increase the market information available on last-mile connectivity and drive investment into sustainable and market-driven solutions.

One interesting example of a last-mile connectivity enterprise is AirJaldi, that operates a wireless internet service and network of wi-fi hotspots in India. Through the use of wi-fi links and relays as well as locally trained staff for deployment and operations, the company has been able to offer affordable prices for their incredibly loyal 250,000 rural and low-income users. It has shown a 250% increase in the last two years demonstrating that a new rural network can be profitable within 12-18 months.


There are many more examples of enterprises deploying solutions or looking to enter the market, in our database of last-mile connectivity enterprises. 



1

The Evolution of Inclusion

The Ten Photos to Shake the World is a photo contest organized by ASSIST that seeks to promote awareness of development concerns. Now on its seventh year, TPSW with the theme, “Digitalizing Development - Innovations for Inclusive Societies”, highlights how inclusion has evolved through the years with the help of digital technology.

Featuring entries such as a floating school that harnesses solar energy for learning and an example of modern-day pottery, this year’s photo contest bridges the gap to maximize participation between underrepresented groups such as youth, women, elderly and indigenous communities. 



2



- 1 Professional Winners:**
1st Place: Companion – A woman taking advantage in using digital technology in the production and marketing of her pottery making business. Photo by Jesse Lopez Alegre.
- 2 2nd Place: Grandma, this is a laptop!** – Grandma learns how to operate a laptop from her grandchildren. Photo by Chetan Soni.
- 3 Runner Up: Ifugaos and Camera** – Ifugao women from the Philippines try to take a selfie using a digital camera. Photo by Julius T. Alcaraz.
- 4 Non-Professional Winners:**
1st Place: Floating school and Solar Technology – A floating makeshift school is utilizing the power of solar energy to provide learning to children. Photo by Supriya Biswas.
- 5 2nd Place: Families Connect Together** – A pregnant woman shows a sonogram of their baby to her husband through a smartphone. Photo by Mark Bosito.



BOUND TO NO BARS

A U.S.-based start-up is helping prisoners connect with the outside world.

By Ian Jamotillo

All photos from: Pigeonly

After being involved in the marijuana business, Frederick Hutson ended up on the wrong side of the law. He spent 51 months in jail, and the silver lining was that he was able to observe prison life from the inside. He saw how inefficient inmate services were, and how expensive and difficult it was for people on the outside to communicate with an incarcerated loved one. Therein lay his idea for the business he would found after this release: Pigeonly.

“While I was there (in prison), I really took my time knowing that I had to do as much as I could to prepare for my release. So I started reading anything I could find on business. I started trying to keep up with the modern technology outside, so I could build a solution for people,” Hutson says.

Through his organization, Pigeonly, Hutson wants to open the outside world to the inmate community, and vice versa. For starters, Pigeonly is a platform that makes it easy for people to search, find and communicate with their loved one who is incarcerated.

In the United States, there are 2.3 million people detained in 1,719 state prisons, 102 federal prisons, 1,852 juvenile correctional facilities and 3,163 local jails. According to the International Centre for Prison Studies, the U.S. houses 22% of the world’s prisoners.

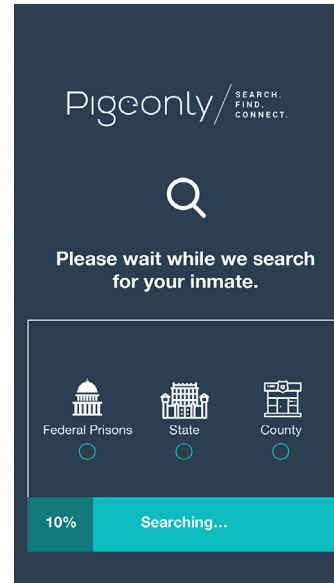
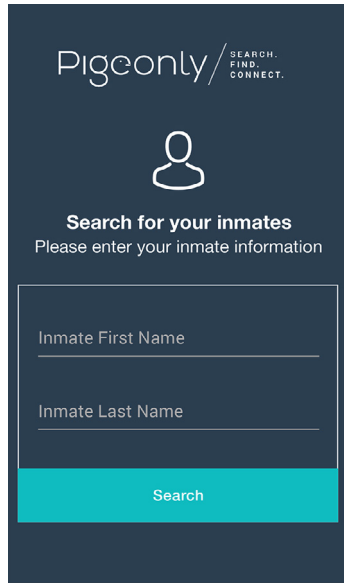
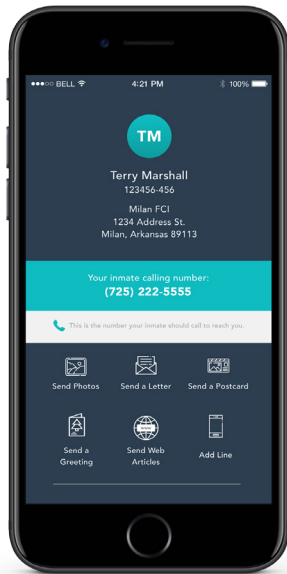
The high incarceration rate is a clear picture of the large inmate community. Despite their number, they remain one of the most underrepresented communities in society—and stigma is just one of the reasons behind their marginalization.

Pigeonly offers several interconnected services. The first is

an online locator tool that utilizes a proprietary 50-state prisoner database, for people to locate prisoners using a multitude of search options.

Pigeonly also wants to make communicating with prisoners cheaper using VoIP services. Similar to Skype, Pigeonly generates a local number that an inmate can use to speak with family or friends at a discounted rate. For instance, a 15-minute call can now cost \$15. But through Pigeonly’s service, the 15-minute call can cost 90 cents, as the call would be a local call.

Besides communication services, the start-up also offers the popular photo-sharing service. Instead of family members physically sending their photos to their friends/family in prison, they can simply upload the pictures: Pigeonly prints and ships the photos, a service quite in demand, as people rarely have time




to download, print, and ship pictures to their loved ones in prison.

However, it was not smooth sailing for Hutson and his team.

The first challenge was to take the abstract idea and create a usable product. “The first thing I did when I got out was to talk to my co-founder, Alfonzo Brooks about my idea, so we gathered money and we basically went out to freelancer.com and posted up a hiring for a developer to take the idea that I had on paper back in prison. We hired an engineer to basically convert what I had into an actual product,” says Hutson.

Finding investors was not easy as well, because of Hutson’s background. At the young age of 21, Hutson ended up imprisoned for moving two tons of marijuana.

“I dealt with a lot of discrimination and it’s because of me, being a convicted felon. It was very difficult, a lot of investors were having second thoughts on investing in my business,” Hutson says. Once the product was launched, it has been doing well with its target demographic. What’s also interesting is the blog that is aimed at people who have loved ones in prison, with practical topics such as: What to Wear (and Not to Wear) to a Prison Visit.

Hutson remains optimistic about the future of Pigeonly, which includes training to employers to help them hire people with a criminal record. In return, released inmates can resume a productive life and be assured that they are still welcome in society. 

“While I was there (in prison), I really took my time knowing that I had to do as much as I could to prepare for my release. So I started reading anything I could find on business.”

Frederick Hutson,
Founder, Pigeonly

Advice to start-ups and NGOs focused on inclusion:

“Whatever idea you may have make sure you stay focused on the core problem you’d like to solve and take full advantage of the fact that having a unique and diverse background gives you a unique outlook and understanding of the problem you want to solve... this is your greatest advantage.”



Please Do Touch This: Accessibility in Museums and Heritage Sites

When culture and heritage are preserved and showcased, people with disabilities are often given short shrift, and that has to change in favour of accessibility initiatives, argues Siddhant Shah.

A visitor touching the Tactile Reproduction of a Jaipur miniature painting at MSMS II Museum, Jaipur City Palace
All photos from: Siddhant Shah

“No culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive,” said Mahatma Gandhi. While the inherent value of culture is that it is socially inclusive, what about the fact that access to the same cultural artefacts is not inclusive, denied to millions of people with disabilities?



Siddhant Shah is the founder of Access for ALL (www.accessforall.co), and the youngest recipient of the NCPEDP-Mphasis Universal Design Award 2017. He has consulted with organizations such as UNESCO, National Museum, City Palace Jaipur and State Bank Museum of Pakistan to make arts and heritage accessible to all.

Take the Worli painting, for example. It is primarily a community endeavour, with some preparing the base coat, and others creating the figures, while yet others preparing the paint. It is indeed ironic that today, the same culture and heritage is not accessible to all, especially PwDs.

Cultural heritage in this context means many things, from the tangible

built environment—monuments, museums, heritage sites—to intangible cultural traditions such as music and language. But sadly, a lot of it is not physically or intellectually accessible to a wider audience. Our heritage sites and monuments lack basic facilities for access for PwDs as there are no ramps, wheel-chair friendly toilets, Braille signage, tactile maps, and other

interpretation mediums, amongst supplementary features. The World Bank estimates peg the number of disabled at 1 billion, or about 15% of the population. Can you imagine the loss of knowledge that PwDs face as they are not able to encounter and experience these cultural artefacts?

A visit to a museum is equivalent to three classroom sessions of multiple subjects. For example: a basic miniature painting from Rajasthan can explain the social construct, costumes, the architecture leading to geometry and maths, the use of traditional colours, and, of course, agriculture and climatology.

Museums and sites like these could actually become a classroom outside a classroom and become a great place of learning for children with learning and intellectual disabilities if they incorporate aspects of Universal Design.

Encouragingly, several public institutions are waking up to the possibility of accessible art. Governments across the region are looking at ways to make the experience of art more inclusive. In India, as part of the Adarsh Smarak Abhiyan scheme, the Archaeological Survey of India, under the Ministry of Culture, has identified 25 ancient

sites for inclusive development, replete with all necessary tourist facilities like ramps, Braille boards with information about the sights, signage, and tactile flooring, as well as disabled-friendly rest rooms. Other facilities include wi-fi, security, encroachment-free areas, and interpretation centres showing short films about the monuments to those who can't physically access the site.

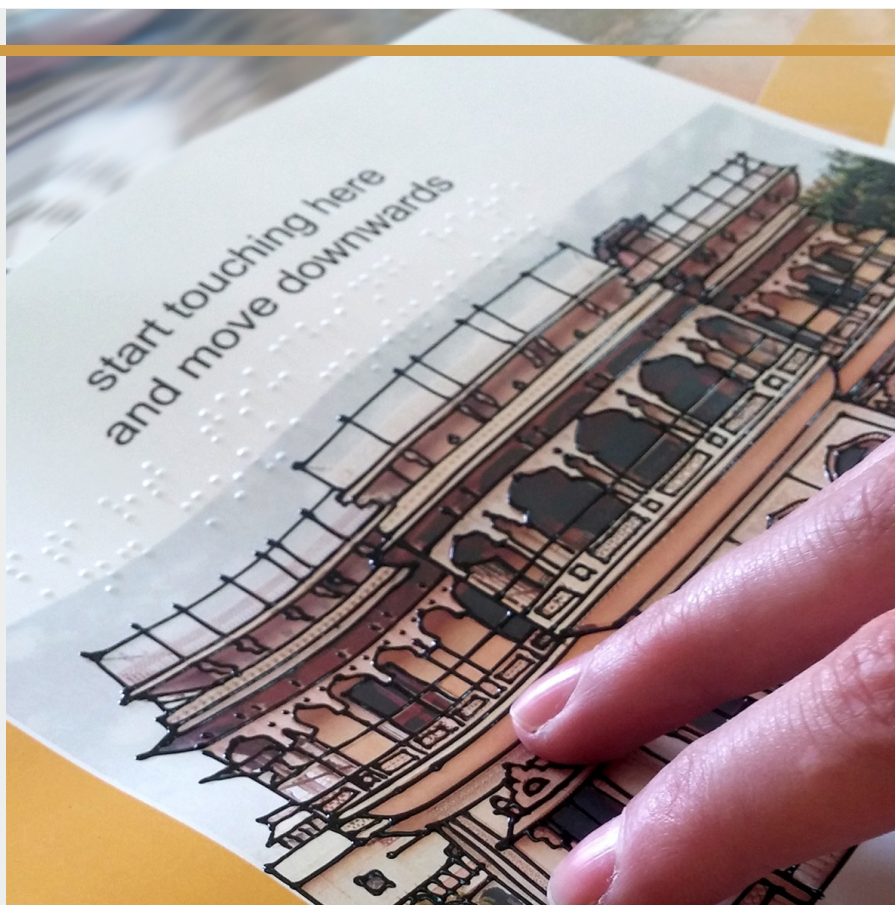
As part of our work at AccessforAll.co, we have created the first museum Braille book for India and Pakistan. The book contains tactile images and large



Tactile art.

To make museums accessible for the visually impaired:

- 1** Develop content and material in Braille in collaboration with a local organization working with the visually impaired, and with the guidance of an accessibility consultant.
- 2** Provide large script font text as not all visually impaired people are totally blind.
- 3** Use sans-serif font in all text materials and avoid use of glaring and bright colours.
- 4** Use contrasting colours, tactile images and models.
- 5** Provide for Braille signage, tactile pathways and special workshops for visually impaired visitors.




Tactile photograph plate from the Braille Brochure showcasing the Mubarak Mahal with Braille guide.

Can you imagine the loss of knowledge that PwDs face as they are not able to encounter and experience these cultural artefacts?

script font. We have also seen a welcome increase in the reception to our services: be it tactile maps, Braille books, heritage interpretation, educational activities with museum objects, access audits or sensitization workshops towards disabilities. Tactile graphics are a means of conveying non-textual information to people who are blind or visually impaired, and may include tactile representations of pictures, maps, graphs, diagrams, and other images (See Box).

Today, heritage sites and arts play a significant role in communication and knowledge exchange. As the heritage tourism industry expands, it must adopt the principles of universal design.

As a first step, there must be a concerted effort to study the experiences of heritage sites as approached by diverse people. The study must feature participation of people with special needs, so that the entire process is inclusive. Combined with the suggestions and expertise of architects and designers, we can truly achieve the “inclusive culture” that Mahatma Gandhi dreamt of. 

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Campaigns that Pushed the Envelope on Inclusion

Inclusion can be a tough concept for people content in their comfort zone. As social media becomes shrill and voluminous, you sometimes need to shake people up to make them pay attention. Here are a few campaigns with inclusion at their heart, in various thematic areas: health, gender, and disability. **They caught our eye for their innovation and impact.**



Photo from: Miss Peru Organization

Vital Statistics

Physical attributes tend to dominate beauty pageants. But organisers of the Miss Peru 2018 contest decided to use the platform to allow participants talk about other “measurements” – like the statistics of gender violence in the country. Strutting in high heels and oozing confidence, contestants introduced themselves by mentioning hard-hitting statistics on violence against women in their country. Sample this: “My measurements are: 2,202 cases of femicide reported in the last 9 years in my country; “more than 80% of women in my city suffer from violence.” The final segment saw contestants speak on the laws they would change to help victims.



Peru

United Kingdom



Green Signal for Gender Inclusion

In a show of acceptance and to celebrate diversity and inclusiveness among Londoners, the green man in 50 traffic lights around Trafalgar Square was replaced by seven kinds of LGBT symbols to ring in London's Pride Festival. The symbols included a same-sex couple, hands joined, showing a heart between them.



Photo from: Transport for London



Photo from: www.TheImmunityCharm.org

Even Once is a Charm!

In far-flung regions of Afghanistan, mortality rates are alarming, with abysmal rates of immunization. A campaign by Mc Cann Health for the Government of Afghanistan, the Immunity Charm leverages the traditional practice of using a talisman, to help parents of children and doctors keep track of the baby's immunizations. When the baby is born, the mother is given the talisman, which is then updated with different coloured beads for every vaccine administered. This campaign swept the Cannes Lions Health Grand Prix for Good in 2017.

Afghanistan

India

Thailand

Remember the Stop

Commuters on Mumbai's local trains were amused when the announcements sounded as if the operators had forgotten the names of stations their train was to arrive at. It was no slip of the tongue but a well-planned campaign that aimed to create awareness of how regular forgetfulness could be a sign of Alzheimer's. Aptly named The Alzheimer's Local, the innovative campaign was conceptualised for the Mumbai launch of HealthCare at Home (HCAH) – India's leading home healthcare services provider. Instead of traditional print or electronic mediums, this campaign created awareness of conditions like Alzheimer's in seniors by reaching out through the suburban Mumbai trains, which serve around 8 million people every day.

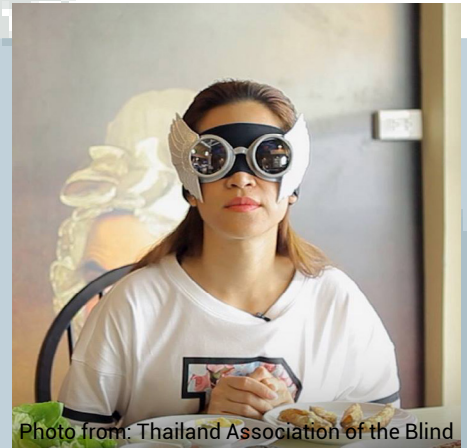


Photo from: Thailand Association of the Blind

The Blindfold Taste Test

Finding jobs is tough for visually impaired people in Thailand as employers are unable to see beyond the disability. And converting a disability to an ability is what Blind Taste, a campaign to make the visually impaired feel empowered was all about. The Thailand Association of the Blind put together a food show hosted by visually impaired people. Leveraging on their heightened sense of taste and smell, the hosts proved to be reliable food critics. Blind Taste became an instant hit, with thousands viewing it to see the honest comments of the new food critics on the block!

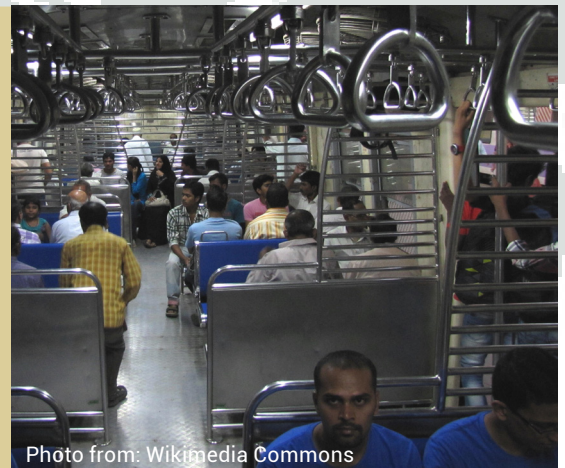


Photo from: Wikimedia Commons



Tips and Tools for Women Activists to Navigate Digital Security and Privacy

By Bonnie Chiu



Bonnie Chiu is an evaluator for Tactical Tech's projects and a participant at Gender and Technology Institute Asia. A regular columnist for Forbes, her interests lie in women's rights activism and social entrepreneurship. She is the founder of Lensational, which trains marginalized women from 21 countries in photography.

Women who are politically active and vocal are more likely to be subject to online risks of disadvantage, harassment, and hate speech as a direct consequence of their gender identity and political work. With civil society spaces shrinking across many countries, especially Asia, more activists are moving online to organize.

How can activists think about and react to these online risks? There is a myriad of tactics and they can be quite overwhelming and technical. As a female activist from Hong Kong without a background in technology, I found a helping starting point to be looking at tools that are easy to understand and operate. One of the organisations

providing such free, accessible resources is Tactical Tech, a Berlin-based non-profit I worked with.

The tools included resources to ensure that women's digital work is safe, secure, and effective. They cover a range of suggestions and tools, for a variety of applications (see box on the next page).

Yet, the toolkits can only take one so far – what Tactical Tech has done shows the importance of building communities of activists. I had the opportunity to be part of the Gender and Technology Institute (GTI) Asia in Malaysia, which convened around 30 women activists from across South and South East Asia. There was a lot of discussion on how this intersects with the increasing surveillance across Asian countries, and with

Sample tools for data security:

[The Data Detox Kit](#) was created to provide individuals with the ability to reduce their data traces and create a more in-control and healthier digital self. The simple 8-day data detox, in less than half an hour each day, helps activists limit their digital traces and protect themselves online. Day 6, for example, is an app clean-up. While it is tempting and easy to download free apps, the more apps we have, the more our data builds up and the more entities have access to it.

[XYZ](#) is a space for practical tools to navigate digital security and privacy from a gender perspective, with contributions from many organisations such as *Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)* and *Asian-Pacific*

Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW) and *European Women's Lobby*. It covers a broad range of topics from online harassment to data politics.

The [Women's Rights Campaigning Info-Activism Toolkit](#) is of particular interest to campaigners. It covers the basics of campaigning, strategies to maximise impact, tools for activists and example campaigns – without compromising digital security. Some example tactics include using “https everywhere” add-on to stop web tracking, Jitsi to chat securely with fellow campaigners, and doing a basic safety and security check. For Asian activists, this toolkit is also available in Bengali and Hindi.

sexual and reproductive health rights, through menstruation and fertility apps.


This community also helps activists further the agenda on technology – so that we are not passively managing risks, but actively shaping the technology agenda. Because of GTI Asia's focus on governance, it was also possible for alumni to participate in discussions surrounding internet governance at the Asia Pacific Internet Governance Forum.

Even though Tactical Tech is not planning any upcoming GTIs in the region, all content is open-source and you can replicate it in your own community, with your fellow colleagues.

The Tactical Tech website on gender (gendersec.tacticaltech.org) features a range of resources

for digital security. The open community invites women activists to join the community. There is also a training curriculum on data and privacy available on My Shadow.

We are now at a crossroad when it comes to technology. It is extremely important for activists – especially women – to engage in such conversations on technology. It affects us and the work that we do. With the rapid advances in technology, and Big Tech dominating the conversations, women's voices are often not heard.

But this can change, and it starts with each of us taking an active step to learn about the evolving trends in technology, to devise strategies to best maximise our impact, and to actively shape how technology can be truly inclusive. 

The community also helps activists further the agenda on technology – so that we are not passively managing risks, but actively shaping the technology agenda.



Disabling Barriers

Universal Design Award Winners Enable Accessibility for All

By Ian Jamotillo

An accessible zipper tailored for people with disabilities, elderly, and children bagged the People's Choice Award at the fifth annual Universal Design Grand Challenge Awards (UDGC) held by the Dublin-based Centre of Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD).

CEUD was established by Ireland's National Disability Authority (NDA) in January 2007 under the Disability Act 2005. CEUD is dedicated to promoting the principle of universal access, and the awards are part of the organization's strategy to bring about change.

Among other projects who took home awards were a social housing project design for families with elderly or disabled members, a safety system that promotes safe cycling and a real-time device that aids people who suffer from sleep paralysis.

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD: Zipit! Motor-free zipping



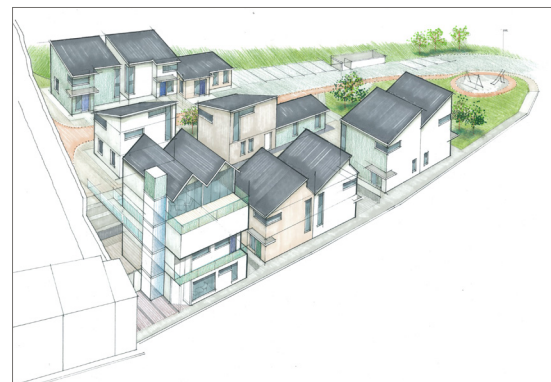
Zipit! Is a redesigned zipper that uses a mechanical system to simplify the process of closing a zipper, in support for the elderly and persons with disabilities. Zipit! works by dividing the runner into two separate halves, removing the need to insert the guide pin to the bottom stop. Zipit! takes advantage of two locking pins held in place under spring tension which interconnect with extrusions in the right-hand side of the runner.

As a result, the process of closing a zipper is greatly simplified to suit a wide range of people with varying levels of dexterity and hand-eye coordination.

"The initial inspiration for the project came when I was helping out in CoAction summer camps, an organisation that empowers, supports and cares for those with intellectual disabilities. Working there, I saw the daily struggles of children when attempting to close a zip. Although it is a small, seemingly insignificant task, there was a strong desire within the project team that closing a zip should be accessible to everyone, irrespective of age or physical and intellectual abilities," said Eveleen Clancy, project manager of Zipit!

Zipit! was created by Clancy together with her fellow colleagues at the Cork Institute of Technology. Clancy told iMPACT that it was their lecturer's passion for universal design that led them to the competition. Zipit! has temporarily been put on hold to allow team members to focus on their final year in college but the group expressed interest in further exploring the idea.

JUDGES' CHOICE AWARD FOR BUILT ENVIRONMENT: Bantry Town Inclusive community for everyone



Designed by the Cork County Council, the winning design is a redevelopment of a deserted site in the town of Bantry in Ireland for use as a multi-generational social housing project. Designed in partnership with the Cork Age Friendly Alliance (CAFA) and sophomore students from the Cork Centre for Architectural Education, the Bantry Town housing project aims to integrate young families, people with older children, empty nesters, elderly, and disabled people.

The housing units will have an inbuilt flexible design that can adapt to changing needs such as aging, or a change in health and mobility. The interior layout of a two-storey house consists of a partitioning system between spaces, wider passages, corridors, landings, open-handed circulation spaces in individual rooms and window spaces in rooms where the sills are lower for wheelchair users to view out of.

Besides fire-considerate inclusive interior layout, the housing project also includes outdoor facilities such as a children's' playground, a self-service launderette that acts as an informal community center, and public spaces for relaxation.

JUDGES' CHOICE AWARD FOR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES:

SensorPath Worry-less biking

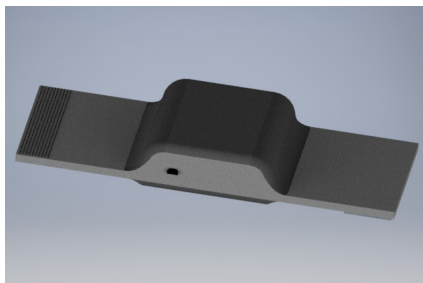


SensorPath is an innovative safety system that aims to improve safety in cycling. Created by Darragh O'Boyle from the Maynooth University, SensorPath takes the form of bicycle lights and sensors. It was

designed in response to the increasing number of cycling mishaps due to drivers not being able to see cyclists on the road.

The front light incorporates an ultrasonic sensor which detects cars up to 10 meters ahead of the cyclist, and projects brighter pulses of light to get the driver's attention. The rear light projects laser lines on both sides of the cyclist to guide car drivers on safe distances for overtaking.

JUDGES' CHOICE AWARD FOR TECHNOLOGY: Safely Snooze The sound of sweet dreams



Sleep paralysis is an inability to move swiftly between the stages of sleep and wakefulness, and is more common in students and psychiatric patients. Safely Snooze is a real-time device developed by students to help those who experience sleep paralysis.

The device is worn on the wrists while sleeping, and uses Electromyography-Sensors to detect muscle contractions and a Green Light Photoplethysmography-Sensors to detect an increase in heart rate. A combination of an increase in muscle contraction and heart rate point to an episode of sleep paralysis, which prompts the device to emit a vibration to wake the person up, so that the episode is averted.


ENTERPRISE IRELAND UNIVERSAL DESIGN COMMERCIALISATION AWARD:

PolyMouse Clicking with Comfort



PolyMouse is the world's first 3D-printed custom computer mouse designed to maximize comfort.

Created by David Flood, commercialisation specialist at Enterprise Ireland, with Stephen Johnson and Kevin Prior from University of Limerick, PolyMouse incorporates an ergonomic and inclusive design that fits the exact dimensions of a user's hand—be it that of a child or that of a basketball player.

The device aims to minimize strain injuries caused by improper computer mouse usage, by employing increased maneuverability and frictionless use across different surfaces. 

What is universal design?

Isn't it just a different word for accessible design?

While accessible design refers to design in which people with special needs are specially considered, universal design is a broader concept that refers to design that can be used by anyone, regardless of ability.

Seven universal design principles were developed by a group of experts under the leadership of Ron Mace, founder and program director of The Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University.

1. Equitable Use
2. Flexibility in Use
3. Simple and Intuitive Use
4. Perceptible Information
5. Tolerance for Error
6. Low Physical Effort
7. Size and Space for Approach and Use

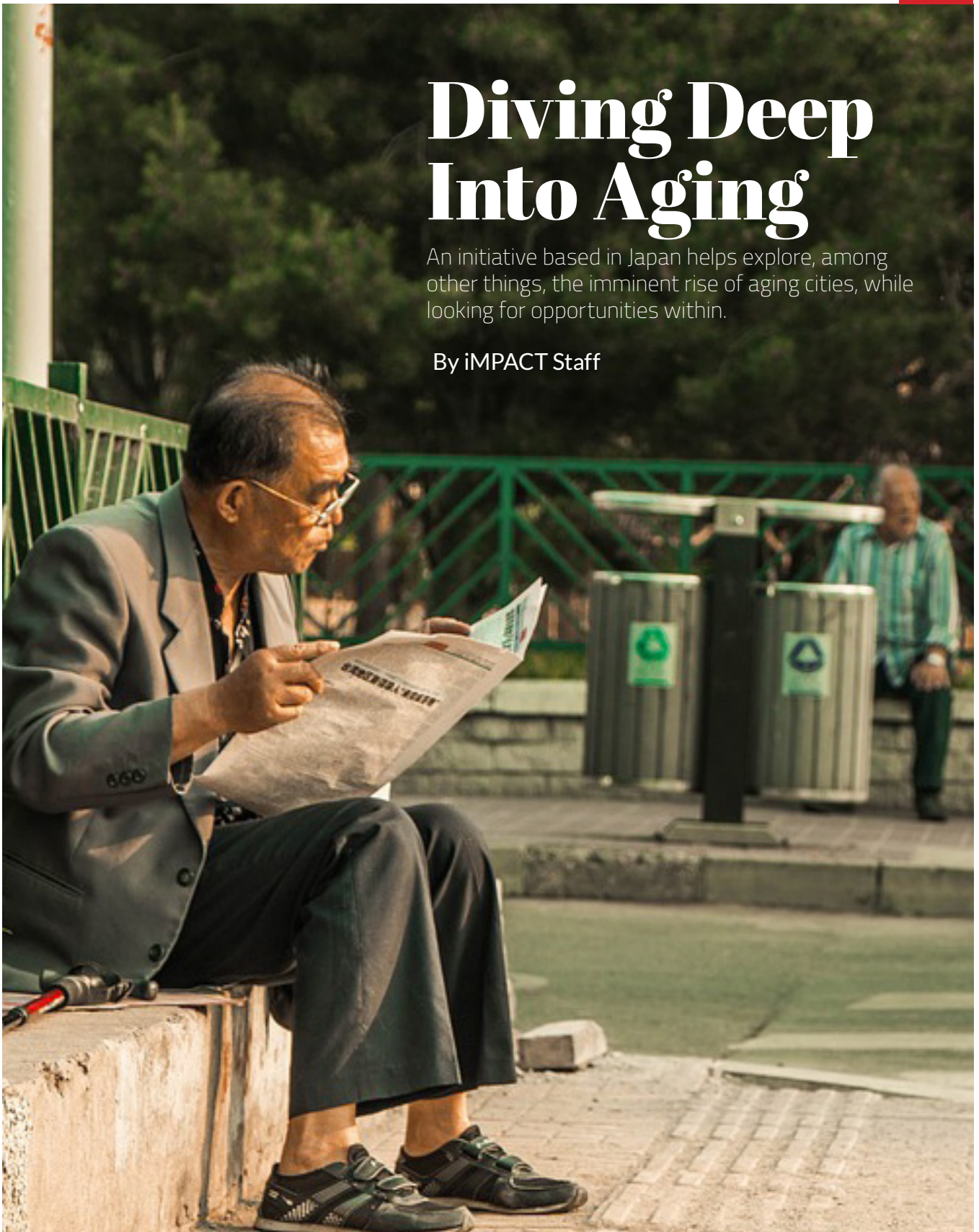
All photos from: Universal Design Awards



Diving Deep Into Aging

An initiative based in Japan helps explore, among other things, the imminent rise of aging cities, while looking for opportunities within.

By iMPACT Staff



By 2050, two out of three of the oldest old (over 80 years of age) will live in Asia and Africa, according to the UNFPA. As seniors live longer and remain productive beyond retirement, countries will have to be ready for Aging Cities. But how?

That was the topic discussed in depth at the World Bank's Technical Deep Dive (TDD) program, organized by Tokyo Development Learning Center (TDLC), a partnership project of the Government of Japan and the World Bank. Over 80 clients of the World Bank from across the globe participated, presented, and learnt about their peers' journey toward making their cities ready for aging. Japan, as one of the countries who face a super-aging society as early as 2025, has taken the lead in preparing for the same, with initiatives such as compact cities and senior-friendly mass transport initiatives implemented as early as 2004.

“What emerged quite clearly was that aging was an aspect that folded into a larger social inclusion approach,” said Daniel A. Levine, team lead of the Tokyo Development Learning Center program within the Social, Urban, Rural and Resilience Global Practice of the World Bank Group. “Around 95% of the initiatives around aging had multiple benefits, including those to the disenfranchised, different social classes, and gender.”

This aspect of aging, that it can be part of a larger strategy of inclusion, was what helped cities look at aging more closely, for it is not one of the immediate requirements of those cities where

basic infrastructure and amenities are still being negotiated.

Along the spectrum of the TDDs, Aging is one of the “Frontier Topics,” one which does not seem urgent now but will soon be. The conversations, therefore, become important in order to have in place measures to meet the new situation head on. The problem with a Frontier Topic, therefore, is that it is not yet a pressing concern for stakeholders.

“It’s not one of the areas where there are really strong practical examples of how to go about addressing these challenges,” said Levine. “But the idea behind it is that we know this challenge is coming, so let’s start planning for it.”

“What emerged quite clearly was that aging was an aspect that folded into a larger social inclusion approach. Around 95% of the initiatives around aging had multiple benefits, including to the disenfranchised, different social classes, and gender.”



Daniel A. Levine
Team lead, Tokyo Development Learning Center program

The TDD program, 18 of which have been held so far—from transportation to solid waste management, compact cities to urban flood management—is meant to be a week-long immersion into the topic, facilitating peer learning and cross-country collaboration. So far, more than 200 delegations from 180 cities and 83 countries have participated in various TDD programs.

What the TDD provides, apart from a strong peer knowledge sharing platform, is also a way for the World Bank to learn directly from clients, said Levine. What it provides the World Bank are unfiltered local attitudes toward development issues.

One of the key elements that came out of the Aging Cities TDD was the need to adopt universal design in terms of urban infrastructure and planning. The social dimensions of the elderly were also eye-opening, with people able to work for longer, and stratifications among the elderly assuming greater importance. Some of the questions were: How do we structure economies to leverage this longevity economy? And how is that changing the nature of work? (See Box.)

The TDD on Aging covered four aspects of Aging Cities:


1. Urban Infrastructure and City Planning
2. Social Dimensions
3. Jobs and Economic Development
4. Fiscal Implications

Apart from fiscal implications for an aging population, which typically signifies a decrease in the taxes collected, other factors such as disruptive technologies, and the expanded role of technology in healthcare were also explored.

With Asian and African countries traditionally looking at senior care as a family responsibility or a community issue, how does city planning come into the picture? Levine said it's a sign of the times that in many Asian countries, elders do not want to move away from where they have lived for years. Elder homes and assisted living facilities have mushroomed, and it might

be worthwhile to explore whether the economics of markets demands a plan in place.

Knowledge exchange and planning will be an ongoing process with the TDD, a unique space where practitioners come together as a core, and the possibilities for innovation are high.

“There is not necessarily space for frontier (emerging) topics to be discussed in detail, and this allows us to do just that,” said Levine. 

The Practice

Along with ideation and brainstorming, the TDD had sessions with valuable practical lessons as well:

Site visits to see Aging-Ready projects in action: Toyama City Downtown, Kadokawa Care Prevention Center, and Machinaka Total Care Center

Presentation about the “Fukuoka 100” project where the Japanese city formulated a plan based on a projected life expectancy of 100 years

Presentation about the Seoul 50+ project, which included a program to equip seniors for active careers beyond retirement

Walk a mile in older people's shoes: Participants wore specially designed “age suits” which mimicked the mobility, sight, and other issues that came with being an old person. “It was a great way to have people experience, albeit briefly, what it's like as an older person,” said Levine.



How Do You Create a Diverse Workplace?



Since 2016, diversity and inclusion has slowly made its way to the top of companies' agendas, spurred by the #MeToo movement. Major corporations have instituted policies and guidelines to track and ensure diversity and inclusion (D&I) in all parts of their businesses. Easier said than done, however, as mandatory D&I training programs have not demonstrated appreciable increase in inclusion indices. A Harvard Business Review article suggests that sending employees to mandatory training might even make it worse.

In Asia, large gaps in inclusion persist. In Thailand, 60% of the disabled are unemployed, in contrast to 1% of the overall population. In India, women constitute only 14% of the total entrepreneurs.

What is the way forward for Asia, in order to achieve true D&I? We get three experts to weigh in.

Localize Diversity Initiatives



Janet Mi

Director of Consulting (APAC)
Aperian Global, International
Consulting Firm

Diversity and inclusion practices from headquarters may not be relevant to every country.

For significant change to happen in APAC, inclusion must be a business imperative supported by the entire organization, driven by an influential leader who understands the region. APAC D&I initiatives are often driven by the need to be compliant with headquarters' requirements, but when spearheaded by an effective leader, we see a significant difference in staff engagement and speed of change.

We need to first agree on our focus. For D&I programs to be relevant in APAC, they need to address regionally-relevant issues. With less overall visible diversity – physical differences such as race – in APAC countries, it is easy to overlook this need. Instead, other diversity factors may play a role, such as regional origin, accents, or dialects. Lack of legal and governmental recognition can also be a barrier, and organizations must recognize and take responsibility for creating truly inclusive workplaces.

We need to dig deeper to find the true cause of inequality and separate it from cultural norms. In China, most dismiss gender equality as an issue because women hold slightly more than half of entry-level professional positions and a significant majority of women are in the workforce. However, women hold only 9% of executive positions. Like their European counterparts, Asian women are held back by the “double burden” of balancing work and domestic responsibilities, but in Asia, this is exacerbated both by the lack of government support in areas of child care and a hierarchical corporate working culture that often requires the employee to be available anytime, anywhere.

D&I efforts must be purposefully and carefully integrated with an organization’s talent management process. Many studies on the lack of female executives cite limited female role models as an important reason for women not moving up the ranks. McKinsey found that in many Asian countries, women tend to drop out of the workforce while raising their families, thus creating an M-shaped curve in female labour participation rates. If employers design roles and systems to support those women interested in returning to work, they may also become role models and mentor their younger female peers.

Lastly, APAC leaders need to “walk the talk” and model inclusive behaviour. Allowing team members to pursue flexible work schedules and being respectful of employees’ personal time outside of the office are merely two examples that promote a safe environment for employees to speak up. Making discussions around diversity a habit in team meetings will further drive the message forward.

States May Need to Step In with Affirmative Action



Amit Thorat
Assistant Professor
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi

Literature hints at the benefits of having a diverse work place employee mix, elevating ideas, creativity, and possibilities, but also the eventual ability of the company to better understand the consumer base and make more profits.

However, all producers and firm employers are not profit-maximizing “rational agents” working to increase personal and shareholder revenues and incomes. As humans, they too suffer from prejudices, stereotypical notions, and personal biases in how they view, evaluate and judge other people—in this case, actual and potential employees.

Neo-classical economics, which is the basis for the capitalist market economy, also points to market imperfections arising out of discrimination, leading to sub-optimal allocation of labor, capital and other resources, thus adversely affecting overall

Economic sense of diversity and inclusion must be made clear to companies.

revenues and profits. From a profit-maximizing economic perspective too, discrimination is a non-rational behaviour.

What the employers fail to want to see and understand is that not only are the discriminated members “meritorious”, but would also bring much-needed drive, focus, hard work, and ambition to their workplace. If a private concern intends to truly care and be concerned about their target customers, then their work force must also reflect or mirror the variety and diversity of the population. Only then can they claim to be true to not only the profit motive but also to social justice.

Yet, as humans tend to be persistent in their beliefs and ideas, the onus then falls on the State to intervene and correct the distortion in the market. Therefore, we find that in countries like Japan, China, Malaysia, South Africa, U.S.A, Northern Ireland and many

others, affirmative action policies are central to private sector hiring. Most of the discriminated groups have a history of being forcibly excluded from access to resources, education, asset creation, and skill acquisition. Thus, state policies have tried to bridge the gap by making special provisions for these groups. Despite members of the group working hard, rising to the level of the privileged in one, two, or even three generations, perceptions about their inefficiency and unsuitability persist.

When society does not volunteer or is slow to change on its own, there might be no option but to bring in regulation to hasten the process along. Affirmative action should not be seen as something to be afraid of, but an opportunity to make the correct economic and social choice. A new age of happiness and prosperity can be ushered in by bringing in affirmative action policies for women, minority ethnic groups, the ex-untouchables, Muslims, tribal people, and LGBTQI people.

Relook Involvement of Private Players



S. Shakthi, PhD

Researcher on gender, class, and corporate policy
University of Cambridge


Serious attempts at fostering diversity must involve a number of both targeted and broad-ranging, as well as short- and long-term measures. Anticipating the challenges that can potentially arise when attempting to implement these policies, many companies have begun to turn to external diversity consultants in order to shape or supplement their diversity programmes. In addition to non-profit organisations providing these services, we are witnessing the emergence of a diversity industry, comprising a rapidly proliferating group of social enterprises and individuals with varying degrees of official certification and on-the-job experience.

We might note that the basis of this diversity industry ultimately rests on the commodification of diversity. As I discovered in my own doctoral research on the Indian IT industry, players in this industry push inclusiveness not merely as a social good, but also, in many cases, as being profitable for clients. Thus, vendors in this sector, relying on a profit-based business model, must sell their

When diversity and inclusion are commodified, everyone loses.

services to potential customers. As a result, diversity-related initiatives such as workplace sexual harassment awareness sessions for employees, to give one example, have become a marketable skill, akin to products that can be sold to companies. Certainly, we can find for-profit diversity organisations that are largely motivated by the social value of diversity in the workforce. However, entry into this sector, from the perspective of possessing adequate credentials and a social justice orientation, is relatively unregulated in many regional and national contexts.

As a result, a space has opened up for consultants who might suggest and promote policies that can seem more attractive in the short-term, particularly when the financial investment required for creating inclusive workplaces is taken into account, while doing little to bring about sustained change

Thus, while seeking professional guidance in formulating diversity and inclusion initiatives, care is required in selecting the organizations that will provide these services. Moreover, this must be accompanied by proper regulation of the diversity industry, to ensure that the goal of achieving greater social inclusion is foregrounded. 



PeaceTrees: Mending the Past, Fixing the Future

A U.S.-based nonprofit involves war veterans in its mission to rebuild Vietnamese communities affected by war, and in the process, they find their own scars have begun to heal, finds Ian Jamotillo.

Amerciless war that left a deep scar 43 years ago has brought life to a mission in search of healing communities in a place that was once a battlefield.

Even today, the scars remain. There are an estimated 3 million land mines/UXOs (unexploded ordnances)/cluster munitions remaining in Vietnam. Over 40,000 Vietnamese have died, and 60,000 injured because of these hidden explosives since then.

PeaceTrees Vietnam is a Seattle-based non-profit organization whose main goal is to address the consequences of the Vietnam War through humanitarian works such as planting trees where bombs once lay, and improving the quality of life of Vietnamese communities through education and livelihood programs.

The interesting thing is that the non-profit is bringing back war veterans to help the region flourish.

“No matter on what side of the war you were on during the war or how you felt about it, or how you feel about it now, no one wants the next generation of children to still be affected by it,” said Claire Yunker, executive director, PeaceTrees Vietnam.

Tracing its roots

PeaceTress Vietnam was born on the day of formalization of ties between the US and Vietnam in 1995. After the tragic death of her brother Lt.

Daniel Cheney in 1969, founder Jerilyn Brusseau vowed to forge friendships with Vietnamese families who were affected by the war.

Brusseau and her husband Danaan Parry headed to Quang Tri Province in the northern part of Vietnam to formalize their vision of building peace with the Vietnamese people. Among their first projects was the clearing of mines and unexploded bombs (UXBs) from a 6.5-hectare contaminated land in the town of Dong Ha.

The Organization began operations by doing most of their

fundraising in their hometown of Seattle, from private donors and small organizational funds. They are also funded by the U.S. Department of State.

Planting the seeds of peace

A major backbone of PeaceTrees Vietnam' advocacy is to bring war veterans to humanitarian works. For one, it is a sign of dedication to heal the wounds of the past.

For five years, Dan Gilman, PeaceTrees Vietnam board member and war veteran, has been leading projects with other veterans committed to the reconstruction of war-torn communities.

"I was looking to return to Vietnam because I wanted to help restore the communities that were once destroyed by the war. Then I came across PeaceTrees Vietnam and found out that they were doing citizen diplomacy tours which allowed veterans to visit Vietnam and do humanitarian work," Gilman said.

In an interview with iMPACT, Gilman talked about his experience when he first stepped into Vietnam, decades after the war. "Going



A veteran volunteer clearing a land.

back to Vietnam brought so many flashbacks," he said. "I was moved seeing the country once again and I suddenly realized that I needed to do something. I needed to get back to the people."

He was inspired by the country's devotion to rising up, which prompted him to join PeaceTrees Vietnam, eventually turning that initial anxiety into a renewed spirit of redemption.

One of Gilman's projects includes the Ba Long Peace and Friendship Community Center in the south-central part of Quang Tri Province, in Da Krong District. Ba Long was a center of heavy

“I was moved seeing the country once again and I suddenly realized that I needed to do something. I needed to get back to the people.”

Dan Gilman
War veteran and board member, PeaceTrees Vietnam



A volunteer inspecting a land for an unexploded mine.

artillery fighting and air bombardment during the Vietnam War and local officials have reported that 97.2% of land in Da Krong District is still contaminated with UXBs.

The Ba Long Peace and Friendship Community Center will serve as a place where families and the entire community could gather, learn, grow, and move forward. As part of PeaceTrees Vietnam's partnership with the Women's Union of Quang Tri Province, the community center will be home for learning spaces for children as well as a venue for sporting and cultural events.

PeaceTrees Vietnam's Friendship Village is located on a 20-acre section of the former Dong Ha Combat Base and provides a physical space for war veterans from both sides to reconnect and foster new ties.

The village includes the Friendship Village Kindergarten for kids, a community hall, sports fields, and 100 homes with running water to shelter economically disadvantaged families who have been affected by UXOs.

The Challenge of Peace

However, it wasn't all hopes and dreams for PeaceTrees Vietnam, as the scars of war lurked just beneath the surface.

The first challenge was to incorporate the veterans back to the lives of the families affected by the war. "We acknowledge that the U.S. and Vietnam share



There is so much work to be done and that there is so much room in the table for everyone who would want to participate in this work. It's very easy to look at the sector, but there's enough room for all of us to do this kind of work. It's the small combined effort of organizations that really count."

Claire Yunker


Executive Director, PeaceTrees Vietnam



A kindergarten in Vietnam sponsored by PeaceTrees Vietnam. All photos from: PeaceTrees Vietnam

a difficult history and that we have looked to go underneath the stigma and the anxiety of that memory to build people-to-people connections between the Americans and Vietnamese," Yunker said.

Acknowledging that the act of returning to work or volunteer in Vietnam might bring about a sense of closure, PeaceTrees Vietnam committed to bring veterans on the ground to reconnect closely with affected families. Besides tree-planting activities sponsored by the veterans, PeaceTrees Vietnam also works with local communities to repurpose lands from which bombs are cleared: for agriculture or as sites for schools.

So far, PeaceTrees Vietnam has cleared 1,041 acres of land, removed and destroyed 105,855+ unexploded bombs and planted 43,850+ trees through the help of its 795 citizen diplomats. 



Charities Must Project Complexity of Their Work

If partnerships are to last, philanthropists and charities must eschew reductionism, and charities, especially, must take the time to explain the complexity and correlations in their work, says Jake Hayman.

The charity sector has a terrible record for investing in its funders and that lack of investment is now affecting its ability to make the change it knows is needed.

Hyper-local, community-led and community-financed work rarely runs into the kind of problems that national or international organisations face: namely that the money they receive and the work that is needed do not match. Working together, it is not hard for donors, volunteers, managers and practitioners to identify how best money can help them to make a contribution to the community because they are all peers and all

experts and, most crucially, they all stand to benefit from the community thriving.

Now let's switch to larger-scale private philanthropy. This tends to come from families who are, by their nature, extremely wealthy or from corporations who situate social responsibility teams in their head offices. In either case, they are not amongst the communities that they exist to serve but instead in privileged urban centres, socially and geographically distant from communities of greatest need.

From such positions, making flexible analysis of what is or isn't

working, whether programmes, activities, and infrastructure are or are not any longer relevant, understanding why local and national government funding would or would not cover the work that you are doing becomes very difficult, but not impossible.

The only solution is for funders to spend time working to deeply understand the systems in which they are operating and the communities they exist to serve. The narrative however, that you have to work hard to be a good philanthropist is popular with neither donors nor charities.

Charities like to be the only "experts" in the room and they

disintermediate the complexity of communities and systems – presenting funders with simple, defined opportunities to make tangible impacts. Funders buy this story because it makes life easy for them – with their million dollars they can fix ten thousand kids, ‘job done’. Of course, the truth is that poor communities and poor people are just as fluid and complicated as those who earn a bit more than them. They are not uniform, defined, wholly logical, and desperate for saving any more than the rich are.

Accepting this means accepting that the work is long and hard, that others are already trying, that your contribution will never be fully defined or recognized and that ultimately you are part of an eco-system, rather than a stand-alone saviour.

Funders who have done their work, who have recruited staff from the communities they exist to serve and who have the humility to be contributors may ask tougher questions and see through sales pitches, but they also give more, give larger grants, move faster and stick at the work for longer. They are real partners who won’t ditch you for a new three-year plan.

It’s easy to come into a school and say that the teaching seems low-quality, the classrooms are overcrowded, the floors are unpaved,

there’s \$100 unaccounted for from last year’s budget and some teachers are absent and to declare a state of emergency. That this community needs saving and that it would seriously benefit from any of a number of sponsored NGO interventions that you could pay for.


The reality, however, may well be that things are on an upward trajectory. The classrooms are overcrowded with children because girls now go to school. That nutrition levels are infinitely better than just five years ago. The teacher is by no means perfect but he turns up for work and knows the community and speaks the language of the children, which is more than can be said for the absent teachers who travelled home 10 hours by bus for the weekend because they are so unhappy and haven’t made it back. Whilst the floors are unpaved, just five years ago, the whole school was outdoors.

Just as things start to seem a little more complicated than you thought, you find out that the school is also covered by projects from five other NGOs. The Head cannot name them.

Given this situation, what do you do as a philanthropist? It’s impossible to tell. So philanthropists avoid this situation. Instead they pick up a charity brochure with a simple photo of a child smiling and a child crying and pay for whatever made Child B

stop crying in the way Child A has. They buy the community presents.

The reality is that everything is complicated and hiding in shiny buildings in capital cities or foreign homes in order to avoid that complexity isn’t helpful for anyone. Charities need to take concrete steps to work their philanthropists and foundations harder – insist that they spend time listening to communities and not try to curate those conversations; put frontline workers forward for meetings with funders rather than smooth executives, try to share learning and insight rather than your achievements and business plans and, more than anything, talk through the limitations of the work you are doing and draw attention to the things that you hope they will fund others to do. Yes, you may scare off one or two donors, but those that stick around will be better for you and better for the broader sector.

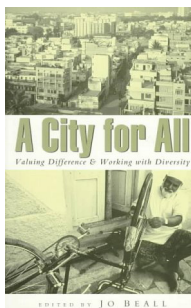
Ultimately, we, as social sector professionals, need a new relationship where they work harder to earn our partnership and we need to stop lying to them so that we can earn theirs. 



Jake Hayman is the CEO of philanthropy education firm Ten Years’ Time. He works with some of the world’s leading philanthropist to help them better understand the communities they exist to serve. He is also a 2027 Partner – working to bring diversity and new expertise into grant-making.

Charities need to take concrete steps to work their philanthropists and foundations harder – insist that they spend time listening to communities and not try to curate those conversations; put frontline workers forward for meetings with funders rather than smooth executives, try to share learning and insight rather than your achievements and business plans and, more than anything, talk through the limitations of the work you are doing and draw attention to the things that you hope they will fund others to do.

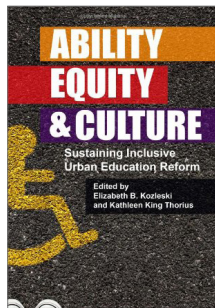
6 Perspectives on Inclusive City Planning



A City for All: Valuing Difference and Working with Diversity (1997)

By Jo Beall

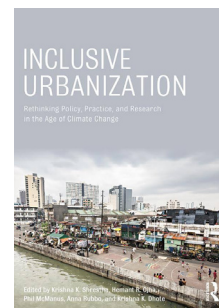
This book focuses on cities and the need for inclusion in human settlements, with a historical context. The book contains a detailed analysis of how women, the elderly, and people with disabilities experience life in the urban setting of cities in India, Spain, and Peru.



Ability, Equity, and Culture: Sustaining Inclusive Urban Education Reform (2014)

By Elizabeth B. Kozleski and Kathleen King Thorius

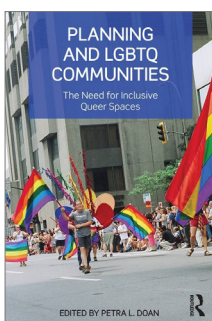
This book aims to empower educational practitioners to take an active role in urban education reform through alternative methods such as reflective teaching and leadership practices, as well as inclusive classroom designs. Written by Elizabeth B. Kozleski, head of the special education program at the University of Kansas and Kathleen King Thorius, assistant professor of urban special education at Indiana University, the book addresses several issues faced by educators who seek transformative school reform.



Inclusive Urbanization: Rethinking Policy, Practice and Research in the Age of Climate Change (2014)

By Krishna K. Shrestha, Hemant R. Ojha, Phil McManus, Anna Rubbo and Krishna Kumar Dhote

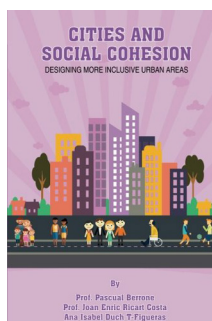
Written by a team of experienced academics, designers, and social sector professionals, Inclusive Urbanization focuses on how urbanization policy and management can be used to make more inclusive, climate resilient cities, through a series of 18 case studies in South Asia. By creating a model of urban life and processes that takes into account social, spatial, cultural, regulatory and economic dimensions, the book finds a way to make both the processes and outcomes of urban design representative of the city's inhabitants.



Planning and LGBTQ Communities: The Need for Inclusive Queer Spaces (2015)

By Petra L. Doan

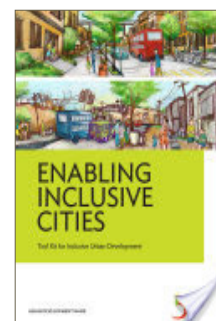
In this book, experienced planners, administrators, and researchers in the fields of planning and geography reflect on the evolution of urban neighborhoods in which LGBTQ populations live, work, and play. The book studies a variety of LGBTQ residential and commercial areas to highlight policy and planning links to the development of these neighborhoods. Each chapter explores a particular urban context and focuses on how the field of planning has enabled, facilitated, and/or neglected the specialized and diverse needs of the LGBTQ population.



Cities & Social Cohesion: Designing More Inclusive Urban Areas (2017)

By Pascual Berrone and Ana Isabel Duch

Cities and Social Cohesion focuses on the challenge of planning and creating more inclusive urban areas. The book contains a comprehensive analysis of the main trends and challenges of social cohesion in cities and a compilation of international best practices on urban inclusion and equitable urban development. This volume is part of a book series called "IESE Cities in Motion: International Urban Best Practices."



Enabling Inclusive Cities: Tool Kit for Inclusive Urban Development (2017)

By Asian Development Bank

This publication presents an integrated approach to inclusive urban development and was written for ADB staff and their partners to engage in inclusive urban development programming and implementation as an integral component of ADB's lending programs. The guide is a valuable reference for anyone looking to stimulate innovation in the design and implementation of inclusive urban development projects.

How to Ensure Your NGO is Truly Inclusive

With inclusion and diversity occupying centre-stage, it is natural for organizations to take a step back and wonder about their own inclusivity. It assumes even more importance for organizations in the social sector for at the base of all social change and empowerment lies the premise that everyone must be given an equal opportunity to succeed.

To be fair, it is but important to realize that inclusion and diversity may not be possible in every NGO. For instance, an organization fighting for women's rights may have fewer men than representative of the majority. This also holds true for NGOs with a religious base.

There are inclusion audit templates available online, for instance, at www.siatoolkit.com, to help you navigate Diversity and Inclusion in the organization. For many small and medium social change organizations, this might not be necessary yet.

Here are some pointers to get you on your way to becoming an inclusive organization:

Before we begin: Take a look at the lay of the land. What's race and religion in the U.S. may not be congruent to a single-race, mostly single-religion Pakistan. So, while researching inclusion, always keep your circumstances in mind.



Formalize it:

Is inclusion part of your organization's mission/vision/HR principles? It needs to be, and also find a place in the hiring principles of your organization. Once formalized, ensure that all employees are aware of the inclusion policies/principles and ways in which the organisation is implementing it. Doing this simply through emails and orientation training may not suffice—make it more immersive and interactive.



Distinguish internal and external inclusion:

It is often difficult for social change organizations to think of themselves as anything but inclusive, working as they are for the vulnerable and those who are typically excluded from the mainstream. However, it is important to note how inclusion plays itself within the organization as well. Always separate the two, so that you get a true picture of how inclusive you are.



Focus on quality, not just quantity:

How many of your employees are PwDs? From the LGBTQ community? From religious minorities? This will give you rough figures, but look beyond the quantity, to how they are engaged. Resist the temptation to “simply count”. Analyse the data. Map out the decision processes. How many of the traditionally excluded are in decision-making positions? How many are on the board of trustees? Also look at the ways in which the beneficiaries interact with your organization/project structure. How are your beneficiaries represented in the decisions of your organization/project? Are they passive recipients, or are they part of decision making? (Obviously, for a few social change organizations, say animal rights and some child rights organizations, this may not apply in totality.)



Provide a safe space:

Often, diversity and inclusion initiatives fail because the excluded do not feel like they have a place they can go to, for help. Create a formal system where there can be honest and private conversations. Just saying “You can always come to me for help” might still be intimidating. Set aside a time to talk/discuss concerns.



Pay attention:

With smaller organizations, the problem with inclusion might be little things that can snowball. For example, it might be cliques of people speaking in a certain language that a few do not understand. It can be a colleague simply saying, “Here, let me do this for you,” in what seems like assistance, but ends up with the employee feeling excluded. It might be insensitive jokes and banter, or even digital forwards. Make a note of anything that seems like it excludes someone.




Measure changes:

At the end of the day, we want to track changes that we consciously strive to embed in our systems. Check for various parameters: efficiency, relationship surveys, beneficiary satisfaction, etc. These will give a good idea as to where course corrections, if any, need to be made.



Stick to it:

Often, social change organizations are beset with time and resource crunches, and the easiest way is the path of least resistance. Lack of inclusion within the organization may seem to be balanced out by the good that the organization does as part of its mission; however, it is important to internalize the processes and push through some of the changes if lasting inclusion and diversity are to be achieved. 

Grants and Prizes

Grant Opportunities

In this section, we list a few select open grant opportunities. For the complete list of available grants, sorted by geographical location, thematic area, etc. please visit www.asianngo.org

Call for Applications: Social Justice Fund 2018

Deadline: October 15, 2018

Amount: Up to 50,000 USD

Details: <https://ajmuste.org/programs#fs>
The Social Justice Fund makes grants for grassroots activist projects in the US and around the world, with focus on funding efforts related to supporting labor organizing, defending immigrant rights, opposing prison injustice and etc.

Call for Proposals: INSPIRE FUND

Deadline: October 31, 2018

Amount: 5000 - 30,000 USD

Details: <http://www.cpcnetwork.org/inspirefund/>
Inspire Fund aims to support projects and missions that prevent and respond violence against children in low and middle income countries.

Notice of Funding Opportunity: Voice Innovate and Learn Grants

Deadline: November 15, 2018

Amount: €5,000 - 200,000

Details: <https://www.voice.global/call-for-proposal/philippines-innovate-and-learn-grants-v-1877-ph-il/>
The Voice Innovate and Learn Grants focuses on addressing the discrimination experienced by women, persons with disabilities and LGBTIQ groups in the Philippines by improving access to (productive) resources (finance, land and water) and employment in particular, access to social services, health and education and fostering space for political participation.

Call for Proposals: Gray Matters Capital coLABS

Deadline: December 15, 2018

Amount: Up to 250,000 USD

Details: <https://gmccolabs.com/apply/>
This call for proposal seeks to gather and promote projects from social enterprises that focus on the improvement of the lives of women and girls around the world.

Call for Applications: Urgent Action Fund Rapid Response Grants

Deadline: December 31, 2018

Amount: Up to 8,000 USD

Details: <https://urgentactionfund.org/apply-for-a-grant/>
Urgent Action Fund's Rapid Response Grants promotes the resilience of human rights and gender justice movements by supporting the security and advocacy interventions of activists and improves respond to security threats or unexpected advocacy opportunities experienced by women, transgender, or gender non-conforming, activists and human rights defenders.

Call for Applications: Security and Well-being Grant

Deadline: December 31, 2018

Amount: Up to 5,000 USD

Details: <https://www.uafanp.org/types-of-grants-criteria>
Available to women and non-binary human rights defenders and organisations in Asia and the Pacific, this grant will provide support in order to respond to their immediate or time-urgent needs for security and well-being. It is also available for prompt needs for wellbeing such as psychosocial counselling, treatment for trauma, or medical assistance.

Call for Applications: Resourcing Resilience Grant

Deadline: December 31, 2018

Amount: Up to 5,000 USD

Details: <https://www.uafanp.org/resourcing-resilience-grant>
Available to women and non-binary human rights defenders and organisations in Asia and the Pacific, this grant aims to implement an initiative that would contribute towards resourcing resilience for women's human rights and human rights activism.

Open Prizes

In this section, we spotlight prizes that are offered to solutions that seek to create a better world. They are ordered by deadline. Please send details of your prizes to editor@asianngo.org, to be featured in this space.

Patient Identification Challenge

Deadline: October 14, 2018

Prize: 20,000 USD

Details: <https://www.d-prize.org/>
The Patient Identification Challenge aims to provide solutions to identify patients of obstetric fistula, cervical cancer, club foot, and cataract, and direct them to early treatment.

Flipped Classroom Challenge

Deadline: October 14, 2018

Prize: 20,000 USD

Details: <https://www.d-prize.org/>
In an effort to fill 4.1 million teaching positions in Africa by 2030, the Flipped Classroom Challenge will support an effective curriculum to teach students in a resource-limited classroom.

Giving Mobility Award

Deadline: November 15, 2018

Prize: 5,000 USD per category

Details: <https://www.croeni.org/awards/giving-mobility-award/>
Croeni Foundation's Giving Mobility Award seeks to develop assistive walking technology which qualifies as exoskeleton or assistive walking device and mimics natural human movement, i.e. walking, running, etc. The prize is divided into three categories: ECO - A working prototype of a sustainable walking assistive device to help maintain mobility for the ill and People with Disabilities in less developed countries. SILVER - A working prototype to support the elderly and improve their life quality. SPEED - A working prototype to aid runners, abled or disabled to win any 10km, 21km or 42km through assistive running technology.

AGFUND International Prize 2018

Deadline: November 30, 2018

Prize: 1,000,000 USD

Details: <http://agfund.org/media-center/gallery/agfund-prize/agfund-prize/>
Under the subject "End of poverty in all its forms everywhere", the AGFund International Prize 2018 seeks to invite NGOs/NPOs to incite and encourage innovation and creativity in human development work. It aims to highlight best practices and efforts that improve the living conditions of the poor and disadvantaged people particularly women and children.

UNESCO-Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture

Deadline: December 15, 2018

Prize: 60,000 USD

Details: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/events/prizes-and-celebrations/unesco-prizes/sharjah-prize/>
The UNESCO-Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture aims to recognize NGOs/NPOs/individuals who have contributed significantly towards the development, promotion and spread of Arab culture in the world, through artistic or intellectual work that improves inclusivity and mutual understanding.



THE STORY OF A CONFERENCE NEWBIE

By iMPACT Staff

What do a contract bridge tournament, a development sector conference, and an Indian wedding have in common? A lot of wasted cards. Apart from a surfeit of business cards, what else is exchanged at these conferences? What really happens?

Here's the story of one such attendee delegate—**Ms. X**.

Before the conference:

1. An email arrives, announcing the next edition of the conference that will change the world. A slight scuffle breaks out in the office, with regard to attending the conference. The direction of the scuffle (want to go/don't want to go) depends on various factors, not including and definitely excluding: the quality of prospective conversations, the themes of the sessions, and relevance to the organization's area of work. It definitely includes the venue's Zomato rating.
2. After X is included in the list of delegates (decided by lots or Rock, Paper, Scissors, as the case may be), the sessions are scrutinized

- carefully for prospective funding leads. Sessions with CSR heads are highlighted. X is given the task of researching the CSR heads' area of work, lifestyle, hobbies, and pets' names.
3. Conference updates are monitored, and there's considerable excitement. Lest too much excitement build up, senior management gives targets for the conference. "At least hundred leads must result," they say, dampening spirits somewhat. What they don't know, or probably don't care, is that conferences also double up as informal job fairs. So there, X says to herself.

During the conference:

1. During and just after the inauguration, troops see their old friends and circulate, exchanging notes about their struggle for: funding, Saturday off, raises, and other sector-based issues.
2. When the conference begins in earnest, troops disperse. Due to the Law of Concurrent Interesting Sessions at Conferences, the most interesting/relevant sessions are

- always happening concurrently. So X and her colleague split the sessions.
3. Lunch time arrives, and it's time to sow some wild business cards. X is on the ready, foregoing time at the buffet counter for work, looking for prospective CSR heads. But they are not to be seen, or worse, completely surrounded. X retreats to a safe distance, still within view of the buffet. She is approached by a gentleman who introduces himself as Y, and cards are exchanged. He strikes up a conversation with her, and together, they bemoan the state of the environment (X's area of work). He carries on, and she is left nodding, even as several of her "targets" walk past, alone. As she unsuccessfully tries to extricate herself from the conversation, the targets are gheraoed. She continues the conversation with the gentleman and enjoys the buffet. There is one more day anyway.
4. Pattern is repeated the next day, as X sometimes swoops in on people and gets their cards too.
5. At the end of the conference, there is a cultural show and

the organizers congratulate themselves on a job well done.

Some random numbers are thrown around, like a game of Bingo.


6. X packs her bags and returns home.

After the conference:

1. The next day, X is summoned to the director's office, and is asked about the conference. She talks about her experiences and knowledge gained, and the director stops her. Asks her about how many contacts she made. X evades the question.
2. X sends emails out to all the IDs listed on the business cards she has brought along. Twiddles thumbs.
3. She is excited that she has five unread messages as soon as she is back from her tea break. Opens the tab to see they are all vacation auto-messages.
4. Tells herself she should have taken a holiday too.
5. X gets down to work, until the next conference is discussed.

A more fairy-tale ending would be the following, we agree. So we just have it down as an alternate, in case this column is too alarmist, like those climate change people.

1. X comes to the office and sees an email for her, from Y, the gentleman she met on Day 1.
2. Discovers he is the director of a large to-be-launched environmental foundation. He tells her he loves her work and asks her for more information.
3. X dances in the office. A first.

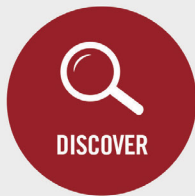
This column is meant to be a light look at the sector and did not harm any development sector professionals in its making. Please send comments, questions, and conference passes to editor@asiango.org. 

TITLE OF ARTICLE	ORGANIZATION	WEBSITE
This Caught Our Eye: Go Fish!	Lucky Iron Fish	www.luckyironfish.com
This Caught Our Eye: Help Is Always at Hand	& Hand	www.andhand-project.com
This Caught Our Eye: Inclusion at Play	Gudgudee	www.gudgudee.in
This Caught Our Eye: Freeing Labels on Comfort	Stalled	www.stalled.online/
This Caught Our Eye: Toys R Also Us: LGBT+	Peach Fuzz	www.facebook.com/little.peach.fuzz.chicago/
Indigenous People's Rights Mandatory in SDG Discourse	Asia Indigenous People's Pact	www.aipp.net
Out-of-the-Box Thinking	Zero Connect	www.wforc.in/zeroconnect
Interview: Meera Shenoy	Youth4Jobs	www.youth4jobs.org
The Sound of Communities	AMARC Pasumai FM Gurgaon Ki Awaaz	www.amarc.org www.facebook.com/pasumaiFM www.trfindia.org/community_radio.php
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Bound to No Bars	Pigeonly	www.pigeonly.com
Please Do Touch This: Accessibility in Museums and Heritage Sites	Access for All	www.accessforall.co
Tips and Tools for Women Activists to Navigate Digital Security and Privacy	Tactical Technology Collective	www.tacticaltech.org
Disabling Barriers	Centre for Excellence in Universal Design	www.universaldesign.ie/Home
Diving Deep into Aging	Aging Cities TDD	collaboration.worldbank.org/content/sites/collaboration-for-development/en/groups/tdlc-technical-deep-dive/groups/aging-cities-tdd.html
Mending the Past, Fixing the Future	PeaceTrees Vietnam	www.peacetreesvietnam.org
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DISCOVER

Grants & Opportunities

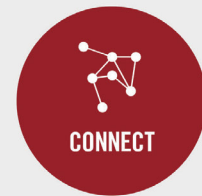
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