

# ASSIST *Now*

## Ready to Defend!

7,900+ Individuals ready to defeat COVID-19

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# ABOUT ASSIST

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

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



Let us know your thoughts about this quarter's newsletter.

Click here



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Join us as a partner, contributor, or sponsor. Together, let us work hand in hand to build more sustainable societies.

You may connect with us through [info@assistasia.org](mailto:info@assistasia.org) or visit our website at [www.assistasia.org](http://www.assistasia.org) for more information.

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# WORKING TOWARDS THE SDGs

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



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APRIL - JUNE 2022



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ASSIST has expanded its thematic areas! ASSIST has been working on agricultural and sustainability projects since 2003, and we have recently expanded into health projects. Furthermore, since the beginning of the pandemic, ASSIST has supported a variety of health projects. And now we've progressed to new heights, handling cancer awareness from cervical to breast cancer.

Read more about it below!

## Project Preview



Three out of every hundred Filipino women are diagnosed with breast cancer, despite various initiatives, the country continues to lack knowledge and education about breast cancer screening.

Project Likayan is an initiative that aims to empower Filipino women on how and when to conduct breast self-examinations.

Country: 



Research shows that 90% of cervical-related deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. In recent years, Vietnam has had a steady increase in cervical cancer cases. However, being a developing country, Vietnam struggles to create the long-term health infrastructure that developed countries have.

Project ACTIVE aims to solve Vietnam's lack of long-term health infrastructure by introducing a new kind of cancer treatment.

Country: 





# Ready to Defend!



A pandemic is one of the most disruptive and daunting dilemmas that any society can experience. Accordingly, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted our lives in many different ways. Halting everything, from schools to work and travel; moreover, this pandemic has negatively affected our country's economy. All sectors of society are susceptible to contracting this virus, albeit to varying degrees.

The Philippines remains one of the most heavily affected ASEAN countries. As of writing, 57,000+ deaths were confirmed in the country alone. In some areas of the Philippines, more notably in high-density poor residential areas of Metro Manila, it is becoming more at risk due to crowded living quarters and limited open space, inadequate water and sanitation infrastructure, and non-compliance with health protocols. Hence, this accounts for most of the positive cases in the country.

**Project COVIDefense** aims to **engage, educate, and empower community healthcare providers and residents on proper COVID-19 preventive measures in Islang Puting Bato, Tondo, Manila, on appropriate COVID-19 preventive measures** and home management to address gaps in infection prevention and control practices and reduce the impact of COVID-19 in their community.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



4 QUALITY EDUCATION



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



**100+** community healthcare workers trained on COVID-19 infection prevention and control



**7900+** community residents capacitated on proper preventive measures on COVID-19 home care and treatment



**1500+** households visited for house-to-house training



**625** units of COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Tests Distributed



# Cycling for an Abuse-free and Gender-sensitive Philippines

**A**nn Angala is a strong independent mom of five and a domestic violence survivor of 19 years. Her experience prompted her to pursue a full-time career in the development sector, in order to continue to support others who have gone through similar experiences as well as assist women in any struggle that requires emotional support.

According to the National Demographic Health Survey (2017), one in every four women has been subjected to VAW by their husband or partner, despite the fact that VAW occurs not only in the home but also in school and work environments, whether physical, sexual, or emotional. The Break the Cycle project, in collaboration with the Bikers United Movement (BUM), InThePink, and the Dutch Embassy in the Philippines, continues to support the Violence Against Women (VAW) campaign, which aims to be the foundation to educate the public on the on-going Gender-Based Violence.

By the end of 2022, Break the Cycle aims to touch, train and transform the lives of 30,000+ Filipinos to create an abuse-free and gender-sensitive Philippines. This is done by promoting “biking” as an effective tool for healing and empowerment.



Read more about the impact of the BTC project through these testimonials shared by our beneficiaries.



“

I will continue to tell our story about how we (my children and I) dealt with abuse. In times of dread and uncertainty, I shall be courageous. I will fight until there is a change in mentality or until I die, whichever comes first.

- Ann Angala

“

Break the Cycle is a liberating factor for many women here in the Philippines. More so, biking introduces a new dimension since we attached it to VAW and the LGBTQ community, we believe that this project will prosper in the coming months.

- Counselor Corie Raymundo







**C**orn is a major crop in the Philippines. However, intensive farming practices have resulted in severe soil erosion and deterioration. Together, ASSIST and Syngenta Philippines, Inc. have a soil health project called SIBOL, or to sprout in English. SIBOL aims to educate farmers on regenerative soil management and climate-smart agricultural practices and double farmers' agricultural yields within the next three years from current levels of four metric tons per hectare.

SIBOL was implemented with the help of the Ifugao State University, Isabela State University, Alfonso Lista's Municipal Agricultural Office, and the Bureau of Soils and Water Management. In order to address the issues faced by local farmers, this project will train farmers in Ifugao and Isabela through model farms that demonstrate the benefits of adopting sustainable farming practices and effective soil management.

Moreover, as our population continues to grow, food scarcity and security are becoming an unavoidable problem. SIBOL aims not only to address these issues but to also help our farmers boost agricultural productivity and yield in a sustainable manner while enhancing long-term soil health.

SIBOL strives to increase agricultural yields to improve the country's agricultural production and the livelihoods of maize farmers. With these multiple technologies - we can ensure that the lands farmers use remind productively and assist many farmers in improving their livelihoods. The project's key goals are to raise farmers' income, food security and resilience.





# Lighting the path for tomorrow

The Philippines is one of the world's most disaster-prone countries. Due to the country's geographical location, it is usually affected by multiple natural disasters such as flash floods, typhoons, and earthquakes. Moreover, the Philippines lacks natural disaster preparedness. A 2019 study by Harvard shows out of the 4,368 respondents, only 17% of the respondents are adequately prepared for any natural calamities.

This emphasizes the importance of evacuation centers, which provides a temporary refuge for the displaced seeking safety and protection. Some evacuation facilities, especially in remote areas, lack sufficient lighting. These areas are also hampered by low-lighting conditions due to outdated sources of illumination and frequent power disruptions caused by the calamities. Consistent and reliable sources of illumination are critical for keeping order and ensuring safety in evacuation centers.

ASSIST, Signify, and the Signify Foundation are continuing to collaborate on the second phase of the Sinag Pag-asa project. Sinag Pagasa 2 aims to improve disaster preparedness and resilience in Metro Manila, Cavite, and Batangas. As of this writing, 45 evacuation shelters had received over 2,400 solar and electric floodlights, rechargeable light bulbs, and electric light tubes.



## ASSIST and LMP continue to strengthen their partnership



On March 2, 2022, 1120 mayors attended the League of Municipalities of the Philippines. LMP invited ASSIST to attend their Annual General Assembly for a formal renewal of our Partnership Agreement. This is one of the most important face-to-face meetings since the pandemic began.

Since September 2020, ASSIST has been a partner of the LMP for the Saving the Lives of the Health Care Workers Project, with LMP serving as the logistical partner, and has been able to supply over 10,000+ PPEs (bunny suits and facemasks) to the public hospitals across the country. In addition, LMP issued a Memorandum requesting that all public hospitals engage in our hospital assessments for infection prevention and control.

In the following months, ASSIST shall travel to Ilocos to visit LMP President and Naravacan Mayor Chavit Singson to officially turn over solar and electric lights from the Sinag Pag-asa 2 project to discuss future collaborative projects.





# Ready, Set, Export!

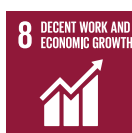
**A**s Vietnam continues to expand its markets internationally - the Dutch Business Association Vietnam (DBAV) has founded a three-year program to guide selected Vietnamese SMEs in their international growth: **Ready to Export**.

The Ready to Export program's short-term purpose is to assist chosen Vietnamese SMEs in expanding abroad and serving as a value chain partner for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Multinational Enterprises (MNE). Accordingly, the program's long-term goal is to build the capacity of Vietnamese SMEs to become long-term value chain partners of Dutch FDI and MNEs in order to establish a reliable trading partnership between the two countries.

The program will focus on three sectors; mainly, agro-food, horticulture, and manufacturing. A total of 300 SMEs will initially engage in the training program's early stages, while a minimum of 90 to 150 SMEs will receive ongoing mentoring and networking assistance throughout a three-year period (2022 to 2024).

We anticipate that with the appropriate training and exposure to European practices, rules, and standards, Vietnamese SMEs will experience a sustained boost in growth and export preparedness.

Get to know more about this project by visiting this link: <https://www.readytoexport.org/>







# Analysing the Future

Often referred to as the 'Pharmacy of the World,' India's pharmaceutical business ranks third in terms of volume and fourteenth in terms of value. However, there is growing worry about the country's lack of adequate testing facilities - particularly for SMEs in the pharmaceutical business, particularly those practicing AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy), the traditional Indian system of medicine and healthcare. Similarly, SMEs in the food and beverage sector, another fast-rising sector in India, face similar challenges.

One of the most significant difficulties that this project aims to address is the lack of suitable facilities equipped with innovative or cutting-edge technologies for conducting quality testing. This is impeding India's expansion in the pharmaceutical and food and beverage industries. Another significant hurdle that we intend to overcome is a dearth of skilled labor. Concerns are exacerbated by a skills shortage in the field of analytical testing. While 48% of Indian businesses address this issue, graduates from the sciences (physics and chemistry) often struggle to obtain mainstream jobs. Our goal is to improve the employability of existing technicians and scientific graduates through training and capacity development.

Through Project Analyse, which aims to establish a newly accredited course on Analytical Instrumentation, implement service contracts with MSMEs for regular product testing and encourage students to pass accreditation courses as analytical chemists.





# Upcoming Projects

## Project Preview: LIKAYAN

Breast Cancer remains the third biggest cause of death in the Philippines and has had the highest incidence in Asia since 2018. In the Philippines, **3 out of every 100 Filipino women are diagnosed with breast cancer each year.**

Despite numerous initiatives, there is still a lack of awareness and education on breast cancer screening in the country. Early identification and screening can help prevent and treat breast cancer, but survival rates remain below 50% due to late diagnosis.

**Project Likayan is an effort aimed at educating and empowering** Filipino women on how and when to undertake breast self-examinations appropriate for their age group.



**200+** Community Champions trained on BSE and Breast Cancer Awareness



**4,000+** women reached and screened for Breast Cancer Awareness



**500+** households educated

Project partners:



Pfizer Philippines Foundation



## Project Preview: ACTIVE

According to WHO, **90% of cervical cancer deaths occur in low-and middle-income countries.** As Vietnam continues to be a developing country - cervical cancer cases have also risen.

Vietnam lacks the long-term health infrastructure that other industrialized nations have, hence the lag behind other developed countries in cancer treatments. One of the leading cancer therapies is the Image -Guided Adaptive Brachytherapy (IGABT), research shows that this therapy improves a cervical cancer patient rate by 25%.

Accordingly, **Project ACTIVE aims to address Vietnam's IGBT issues by tackling the country's insufficient training infrastructure, lack of local experience, and a shortage of trained HCPs.**



**160+** Health Care Professionals

Project partners:



Elekta KFW DEG





A specialized unit under ASSIST, **Creativelab** helps solve the communication, visibility, and knowledge management needs of development stakeholders, such as NGOs, social enterprises, UN agencies, international financing institutions, and others through a mix of contextualized social development, regional presence, and innovative design capabilities.

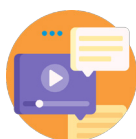
## Project Showcase for Q3-Q4



### Video Development for C40 Cities Finance Facility (CFF)

The CFF supports cities in developing and emerging economies to develop finance-ready projects to reduce emissions to limit global temperature and strengthen resilience against the impacts of a warming climate. As part of its communication strategy, GIZ aims to develop a video on the capacity development initiatives, highlighting the strategic importance of the need for action regarding climate-friendly infrastructure.

#### What has been achieved so far?



5-minute video

#### Project duration

December - On-going

#### Who are our Partners?



## Provision of Audio-Visual Presentations (AVP) and Printing Services of the Philippine Good Regulatory Principles (PGRP)

The Anti Red-Tape Authority (ARTA) is a government agency established with the mandate to administer and implement the rules and regulations of RA 1103 – an Act meant to promote ease of doing business and efficient delivery of Government services. With support from the UK government, ARTS developed a set of principles called Philippine Good Regulatory Practices (PGRP) meant to inform businesses and regulated enterprises of the guidelines. ARTA is now committed to widely promote the PGRP in both digital and other media channels to ensure awareness, appreciation, and assimilation among enterprise stakeholders.

#### What has been achieved so far?



(1) 5-10 minute AVP; (10) 30-60 second AVPs; (10) Social Media cards; 200 copies of ready-to-print PGRP booklet

#### Project duration

November 2021 – ongoing

#### Who are our Partners?





# A-TEAM

## INTERN TESTIMONIES

### What did you think of your internship of ASSIST?

Interning for ASSIST was very fulfilling and I was very happy to know that **all my contributions made an impact on each project I handled**. Seeing real and tangible results **helped me grow as a professional**.

**JUSTINE DE LA FLOR**

*Project Management Intern*

“

My internship at **ASSIST helped me step out of my comfort zone**, I was able to hone my skills in handling projects. I had a great time at ASSIST and I definitely recommend working here. ASSIST is for you if you are hardworking, looking to work at a non-profit if you want to grow your network and knowledge about grassroots organizations and everything around helping others in the world and even in the Philippines.

**LARA RAMOS**

*Office of the Management Intern*

“

### What was the biggest takeaway during the program?

**I was able to realize that being in Project Management requires you to have a flexible set of skills on some projects that work on reports.** I was able to hone my skills in Excel and how to deliver a Powerpoint presentation well. Working in Project Management Office required me to have great communication and time management skills.

**JUSTINE DE LA FLOR**

*Project Management Intern*

“

I learned to be patient, kind, and to trust the journey of change that ASSIST and its partners are trying to bring to the world. And I also learned to communicate my internship expectations and experiences and **they gave me enough work to reach those expectations and goals that I have for myself.**

**LARA RAMOS**

*Office of the Management Intern*

“





# Heroes on the Frontline:

*Capturing the Triumphs of  
Filipinos during COVID-19*



## OUR GOAL

Recognize the triumphs of **COVID-19 Healthcare workers** in combating the pandemic through various preventive measures and a presentation



## THEMES

Healthcare Workers in Action  
COVID-19 Response  
Vaccine Operations  
  
Bayanihan in Action  
Community Cooperation  
Preventive Measures  
WASH



## PRIZES

### Professional

First Place	<b>Php 25,000</b>
Second Place	<b>Php 15,000</b>
Third Place	<b>Php 10,000</b>

### Non-professional

First Place	<b>Php 15,000</b>
Second Place	<b>Php 10,000</b>
Third Place	<b>Php 5,000</b>

**START OF SUBMISSION**  
**April 25, 2022**

**DEADLINE**  
**May 20, 2022**

Implementing Partners



avpn