

ASSIST *Now*



Women Empowering Women:

The Transformative Impact of Our Projects

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The cover features images of our colleagues at Assist.

ABOUT ASSIST



ASSIST is a self-sustaining pan-Asian non-government organization (NGO) established in 2003, geared towards capacity-building, promoting sustainable practices, and achieving social impact.

For over **20 years**, ASSIST has nurtured partnerships from the academe, industry, government, and civil society in supporting projects that target meaningful societal transformation while meeting and exceeding shared objectives.

OUR IMPACT IN NUMBERS



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

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You may connect with us through info@assistasia.org or visit our website at 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.



SOME OF OUR PARTNERS IN THE PREVIOUS QUARTER



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APRIL - JUNE 2024



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MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGEMENT TEAM

The latest ASSISTNow Newsletter continues its tradition of summarizing our collective efforts toward an inclusive future. It's a platform to recognize and celebrate the unsung heroes behind our projects: the ASSIST staff, dedicated partners, and the beneficiaries who transform their lives through our services. This issue underscores the power of empowerment and capacity-building in driving sustainable change. Notably, the spotlight is on projects that empower women, reinforcing their pivotal role in shaping progress. The ASSISTNow Team eagerly shares these inspiring stories with our readers, promising more to come!

Sreeni Narayanan
Managing Director

Francis Macatulad
Program Director



TB MIND Asia Launch: Pioneering the Integration of Mental Health and Tuberculosis Care

On March 15, 2024, the Launch of Tuberculosis-Mental Health Integration Initiative Development - Asia (TB MIND Asia) was held in Dusit Thani, Manila. TB MIND Asia is a three-year activity funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), designed to identify the potentials for integrating mental health (MH) services and tuberculosis (TB) services in Indonesia, Cambodia, and the Philippines, and to develop an initial framework for collaborative care.



The Launch was attended by various stakeholders from the medical community, including Department of Health Undersecretary, Hon. Enrique "Eric" Tayag. The Launch also featured a multi-stakeholder panel discussion wherein Hon. Tayag, Dr. Nina Beltran-Yap (Pulmonologist), Dr. Joseree Catindig (Neuro-psychiatrist), and Ms. Eloisa "Louie" Zepeda-Teng (TB survivor and President of TBPeople Philippines Organization, Inc.) delved into the topic of TB, MH, and the integration of the two in the Philippine context.



DepEd Recognizes ASSIST's Collaborative Achievements



ASSIST has forged a strong partnership with the Department of Education (DepEd), working on numerous initiatives aimed at transforming the educational landscape for Filipino students. This enduring collaboration was honored on February 20, 2024, during the Partners' Appreciation and Recognition Program, where ASSIST was presented with a Plaque of Appreciation. The recognition was presented by Vice President and Education Secretary Sara Duterte, in the presence of representatives from various companies, foundations, local and international organizations, embassies and government agencies. The event served as a testament to ASSIST's impactful role as a steadfast ally in the pursuit of excellence in education.



Women Empowering Women: The Transformative Impact of Our Projects

Women have made significant strides in society. Yet, even as they rise to prominence, many encounter persistent obstacles that hinder their capacity to fully realize their aspirations in both their careers and personal lives. At ASSIST Asia, we are committed to dismantling these obstacles by offering empowering projects and career opportunities that support women's growth and success.

ASSIST Asia is dedicated to the empowerment of women, spearheading initiatives like the ANNAKKO project, which has equipped 47 girls from tobacco farming communities with self-defense skills to combat violence. ASSIST Vietnam, in partnership with Tam Nhung Social Enterprise, has made significant strides in mental health advocacy, reaching over 1,900 women with mental health support and upskilling resources. Through the GrowHer program, we actively enhance women's livelihood opportunities and income in Gamu, Isabela. Recognizing the need for safe spaces to address barriers in male-dominated fields such as STEM, ASSIST fosters women's career growth through events like Cognizant's "Count Her In!", which has guided 100 young women in gender sensitivity and IT industry navigation.

The driving force behind these impactful projects is the exceptional women of ASSIST. With a presence in various business units and offices worldwide, they play a pivotal role in bringing community projects to life. Rich in diverse expertise, the women of ASSIST work under one goal: **Enriching the journey of other women in communities by building stepping stones for them to assert their place in the world.**



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ANNAKKO Initiatives: Empowering Communities with Lasting Impact

The ANNAKKO project has kicked off its training campaign in Ilocos Sur. On January 22, 2024, parents and guardians from Vigan City's tobacco farming communities underwent training on the Child Labour Prevention. On February 24, 2024 in Narvacan, over 200 farmers were equipped with essential financial literacy skills. Meanwhile, concurrently in San Juan and Narvacan, young girls participated in Basic Self-Defense for Girls sessions, part of ANNAKKO's after-school initiatives aimed at fostering personal safety awareness.

The ANNAKKO project is a collaboration between ASSIST and PMFTC Inc., supported by private sector partners such as Universal Leaf Philippines and Trans Manila Inc. Additionally, the Rotary Club and Rotaract Club of Ilocos Sur have also extended their support to this initiative.



Marawi, Lanao del Sur – In a significant move to support post-conflict recovery, emPOWER's six-day training, from February 12-17, 2024, backed by Schneider Electric Foundation and DEG Impulse, honed the skills of master trainers from seven Tech-Voc Institutions. The program, aimed at empowering 700 displaced youth to become green technicians, is a cornerstone in rebuilding war-torn communities.

Complementing this, Schneider's installation of advanced technology at Dualtech Training Center and subsequent training from March 5 to 8, underscores a deep commitment to advancing technical education and sustainable development in Marawi.

Green Skills for Resilience: Empowering Marawi's Youth



On February 17, 2024, the NextGen Workforce program officially kicked off its Project Training of Trainers in Antipolo, Rizal. Over 200 people attended the inaugural session, which included TESDA Rizal trainers, TechVoc educators from DepEd Rizal and Antipolo City, and dedicated EY employee volunteers. The project was designed to benefit NextGen's partners, TESDA and DepEd. On March 16, 2024, 150 educators from Region IV-A also received training.

NextGen's Training of Trainers project strives to prepare educators with the necessary skills to mentor and inspire the upcoming generation of Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET) students. More training sessions in other regions are expected to be conducted in the forthcoming quarter.

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Empowering Educators: NextGen's Training of Trainers Takes Off



AgriSagana's Skill Enhancement Initiative for Farmers

We conducted Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Corn Quality training for corn on March 20, 2024, with 300 agricultural students from Isabela State University — San Mateo, as part of our AgriSagana project with Cargill Philippines. This initiative aims to enhance the technical, managerial, and sustainability skills of future farmers.

The training was led by Engr. John Celoy, Jr., a professor at Ifugao State University — Potia, and Mr. Danny Barwelo, Agricultural Technologist from the Alfonso Lista, Ifugao Municipal Agriculture Office. Jennifer Sabianan, Cargill's Community Responsibility Head for the Philippines, and James Ave, Technical Sales Manager for the Agricultural Supply Chain - Grains in the Philippines, also joined us.



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CoE Thailand's Training Center Inauguration

The Center of Excellence (CoE) Thailand recently inaugurated its training center at the University of Technology North Bangkok - King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi. Distinguished guests, including French ambassadors, Schneider Electric leaders, and OVEC attended the opening event.



This project, facilitated by ASSIST and in partnership with Schneider Electric Foundation and the Office of Vocational Education Commission, marks a significant milestone in enhancing vocational education in the country. CoE Thailand aims to train 160 teachers in over 15 vocational universities for them to pass down their learnings to as many as 42,000 vocational students.



ASSIST Vietnam Joins USAID's Clean Cities Blue Ocean Workshop



On March 13-14, 2024, ASSIST Vietnam attended as one of USAID's seven project benefactors in the Lesson Learnt Workshop organized by the Clean Cities Blue Ocean (CCBO). The workshop showcased the progress and achievements of all seven beneficiaries of the USAID grant. ASSIST Vietnam's project, which focused on the improved and integrated recovery and circular economy schemes in Danang City, highlighted its successful collection of 61.8 tons of recycled waste and the establishment of seven materials recovery facilities (MRFs). Representatives of USAID and government agencies in Vietnam were also in attendance. The event emphasizes the importance of local participation and government involvement in these initiatives to ensure the sustainability of the projects.



Celebrating Progress And Facing Future Challenges

ASSIST Mekong continues to make waves in advancing Vietnam's mental health awareness through its strategic partnership with Tam Nhung Social Enterprise in the "Mental Health for Women in the Family" project. Since 2022, it has reached over 1,900 women by offering psychiatric counseling services and capacity-building training.

In celebration of its achievements, the project organized an intimate gathering attended by experts on the project. The night was dedicated to celebrating project milestones while also emphasizing the urgency of addressing the indifference to mental health issues in Vietnam.



ASSIST's Role in P4G: Sharing Insights on Climate Initiatives

On January 23, 2024, the Vietnamese Ministry of Planning and Investment and ASSIST, through the Partnership for Green Growth and Global Goals 2030 (P4G), hosted a workshop on "Sharing information about P4G's Funding for Partnerships on Green Growth and Climate Actions."



ASSIST's very own team also participated as speakers in the workshop. International NGOs and government representatives graced the event with their presence. The second phase of P4G (2023-2027) involves nine countries, including donor nations Denmark, the Netherlands, and the Republic of Korea, as well as implementing countries Colombia, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, South Africa, and Vietnam. Notably, Vietnam will host the P4G Summit in 2025.





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.

Campaigning for Equity and Humanity



Y+Global, a youth-led global organization, established the Love Alliance, comprising Young Emerging Leaders (YEL) and advocates across ten African countries. This pan-African movement aims to enhance sexual and reproductive health access for marginalized communities and those affected by HIV.

Following two workshops, ASSIST Creativelab developed the communication strategy for the My Reality Campaign, empowering young key populations to advocate for their rights and raise awareness through social media campaigns.



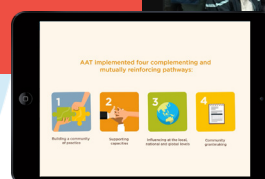
Giving Back Through Financial Empowerment

GlobalGiving, an international nonprofit, leads the Assets, Agency, and Trust Programme in the Philippines under USAID's Local Works initiatives. The program aims to foster innovation and local empowerment, enabling organizations to drive change within their communities.

As GlobalGiving's content and communications consultant, ASSIST Creativelab produced an introductory video for a finance workshop in September 2023, fostering confidence and equipping nonprofits with essential financial skills. They also created an additional video to elaborate on the Assets, Agency, and Trust Programme for participants.



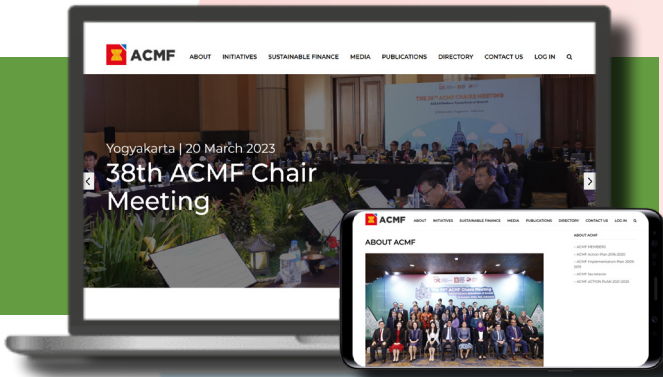
STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS



Navigating ASEAN: Strengthening ACMF's Digital Impact

In 2019, ASSIST Creativelab (ACL) enhanced the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) ASEAN Capital Markets Forum's (ACMF) digital presence through website development. Now, ACL leads targeted digital marketing campaigns, bolstering online visibility and sustaining its commitment to ACMF's outreach.

Their strategy includes precise search campaigns, PPC playbook creation for ACMF.org, and weekly conversion optimization. Continuous refinement amplifies ACMF's digital impact, empowering informed decisions and fostering engagement across ASEAN.

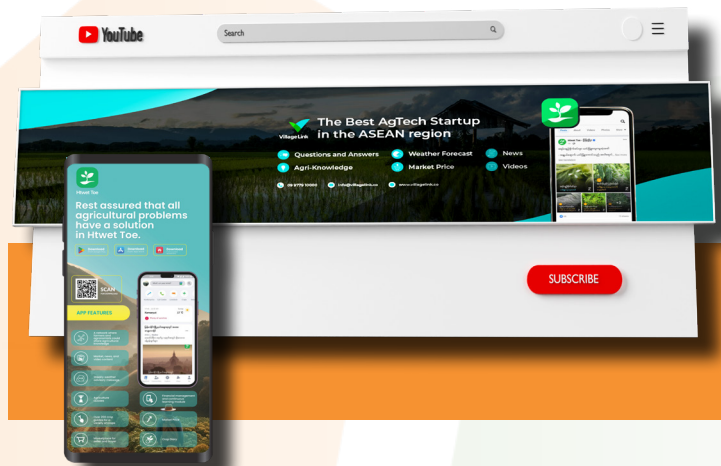


Cultivating Sustainable Solutions with Farmers

The WE4F Grand Challenge, led by USAID, BMZ, the EU, Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Sida, aims to boost innovative solutions for food, water, and energy sectors in developing nations. Implemented by Tetra Tech, the WE4F S/SE Asia RIH provides grants and guidance to promote sustainability and resilience, focusing on marginalized communities and women's involvement.

ACL supports communication strategies for New Leaf Dynamic Technologies in India and Village Link in Myanmar through graphic design, website, branding, and social media design. ACL also offers team training to improve the communication skills of staff and volunteers.

ACL's support empowers New Leaf Dynamic Technologies and Village Link to engage stakeholders effectively, enhancing visibility and success within the WE4F framework, fostering sustainable development in South and Southeast Asia.



Celebration of Love and Luck

Love and Luck brought together Valentine's Day and the Chinese New Year Party on February 13, 2024. Workers from ECCI and ASSIST joined in for an afternoon of fun. The party started with games and foods fitting for both celebrations. Colleagues from ECCI and ASSIST dressed up in colorful outfits to signify their relationship status.



Mekong Office Colleagues Welcome the Lunar New Year



Colleagues from the Mekong office celebrated the Lunar New Year, also known as Tet, with vibrant spirits filled with energy, joy, and li xi, or lucky money. Tet marks the beginning of spring, and colleagues embodied the festive spirit by wearing Vietnam's national costume, Ao Dai.



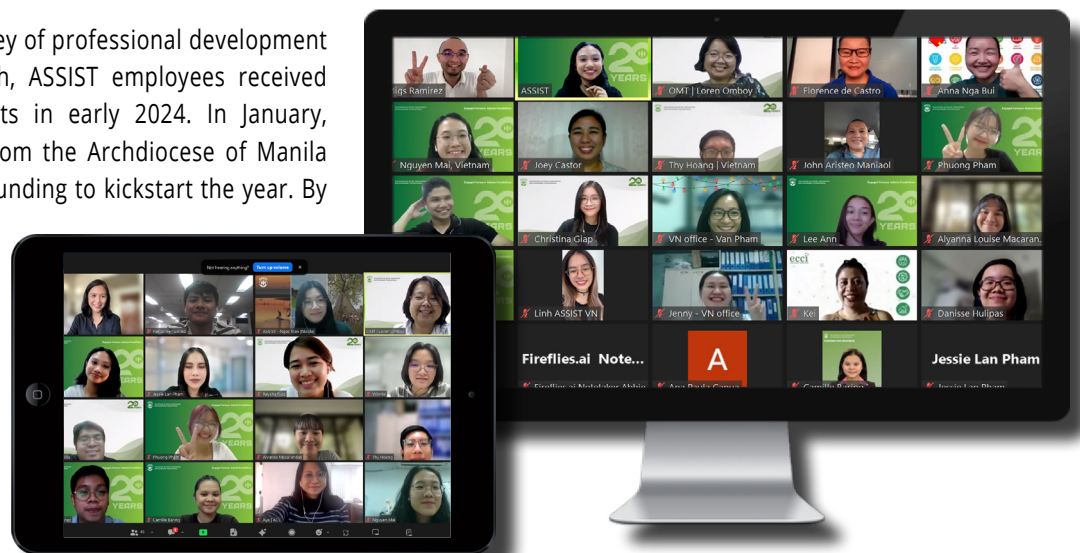
Proposal Writing Workshop

ASSIST's Business Development and Research & Acquisition teams took their expertise to the next level by actively participating in a Proposal Writing Workshop. The goal was to enhance their ability to successfully pursue funding opportunities within the development sector. Ms. Rhea Penaflor, a highly accomplished consultant with a track record of securing sizeable amounts of grants and collaborating closely with USAID and DFAT, facilitated the session.



Learning Session: Knowledge Expansion

Embarking on a journey of professional development and personal growth, ASSIST employees received wisdom from experts in early 2024. In January, Miguel F. Ramirez from the Archdiocese of Manila delivered a lecture on goal grounding to kickstart the year. By March, Ms. Nini Santos, an expert in PR and branding, shared insights on utilizing strategic communication to enhance work and adapt to the dynamic environment. These sessions expanded their knowledge toward self-improvement.



Building Bridges: ASSIST's Collaborative Endeavors

ASSIST unites its employees from all over pan-Asia to foster familiarity with its initiatives as it aims to enhance cultural exposure, build camaraderie and encourage collaboration. Discover what the exchange participants have to say with their exchange.

Anna

"My favorite part during the trip was socializing with the local people, interacting with the children at the Christmas party in the orphanage, and bringing joy to the kids through MOD and attending the ASSIST Christmas Party."



Meena

"Grateful for the hospitality and valuable insights gained. The visit strengthened bonds and fostered collaboration across borders. Looking forward to applying newfound knowledge to our shared endeavors. Until next time"

A Team

Exploring Stories of Advocacy

Climate Justice, Gender Equality, and Cultural Heritage Preservation—a compelling journey through the passionate endeavors of women at ASSIST.

“Our minds are linked to the environment where we came from, and when we experience climate change, it also affects us holistically.”

The climate crisis extends beyond issues related solely to plastics and turtles; it encompasses broader challenges of poverty, inequality, and injustice. Our crucial role in raising awareness is essential for achieving climate justice for all. Therefore, our actions matter.

CAMILLE BARING

Climate Justice Advocate



“When it comes to women’s advocacy, gender equality stands as our cornerstone.”

My work at ASSIST, especially in L’Oréal projects, has immersed me in the stark realities that countless women endure—discrimination and inequality etched into their lives. Their stories, though familiar, never fail to astonish. Contributing my “tiny” part to promote gender equality and empower women fills me with immense gratitude. Join us—raise your voice, take action—for a better, more sustainable world.

NGOC TRAN (NICOLE)

Gender Equality Advocate



“My advocacy centers around preserving the cultural heritage of the Philippines.”

My interest in this field began during college, where exposure trips and lectures allowed me to witness the Spoliarium at the National Museum of the Philippines and explore historical sites like Vigan and St. Paul’s Cathedral. As I entered the workforce, protecting our cultural heritage became a primary responsibility in my first job. I’ve seen communities unite to safeguard endangered properties, sharing their rich histories and emphasizing the significance of each site. Let’s continue to champion our heritage for a better, more sustainable world.

MARA LOGARTA

Cultural Heritage Preservation Advocate



WHAT'S NEW IN SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRY AND ECONOMY

Investing in Sustainability Yields Seeds of Prosperity

The cover features a central collage of images: a woman in a field, a man in a hat, a woman working, a person in a field, a person in a hard hat, a globe, a construction site, and a wind turbine. The iMPACT logo and tagline are in the top left. The title 'SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRY AND ECONOMY' is in large white letters at the bottom. The subtitle 'Investing in Sustainability Yields Seeds of Prosperity' is below the title. A table of contents is in the top right.

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SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRY AND ECONOMY

Investing in Sustainability Yields Seeds of Prosperity

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