

WORLD CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION DAY 2019

Sustaining the Future Using Creativity and Innovation: How Filipino Social Enterprises Do It

On April 21, the United Nations celebrates the World Creativity and Innovation Day which encourages creative multidisciplinary thinking in helping achieve a sustainable future. This also celebrates the role of creativity and innovation in problem-solving, to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

“The United Nations recognizes the need to focus on the importance of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals; in promoting innovation, creativity and decent work for all. Sustainable development is a holistic concept that requires the strengthening of interdisciplinary linkages in the different branches of knowledge.”
(source: www.un.org)

In the Innovation for Social Impact Partnership (ISIP) project, we celebrate the creative and innovative development solutions of our social enterprises in our Social Impact Accelerator. We believe that through these, our SEs help contribute to the bigger goal of achieving and sustaining the SDGs.

Here are some of the creative and innovative social enterprises in the Philippines that provide viable solutions and innovations that address local problems.

Online Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)

Virtualahan is a technology social enterprise which builds an ecosystem for PWDs by providing them digital work while helping businesses of any size to grow. They provide companies with highly-skilled human workforce who can deliver quality output despite their perceived limitations.

In 2015, Virtualahan was founded by siblings Ryan, Josh, and Rose Gersava of Davao City. Initially dubbed as Virtual Eskuwelahan (Online School), Ryan thought of building a social enterprise that aims to train online professionals who have difficulty accessing gainful employment due to discrimination based on their existing medical conditions.

“I have found my purpose here in Virtualahan. Some people consider their disability as a limitation to things they can achieve, but in Virtualahan we are able to see the abilities that we have.



VIRTUALAHAN



HIRAYA WATER



CLEANING LADY

When other people like us see that we can do it, it inspires them also to do the same,” said Mary Grace De Loyola, one of Virtualahan’s beneficiaries and graduates of the online training program.

Virtualahan’s mission is to provide economic empowerment to disadvantaged people who have no access to meaningful employment. Initially focusing on PWDs, they are now expanding to other marginalized groups like indigenous peoples, victims of drug addiction, and single mothers. Ultimately, through systemic change, the social enterprise envisions their beneficiaries becoming leaders and changemakers who influence other communities, thus creating the ripple effect, and eventually creating their own “Virtualahan”.

Intelligent Water System Technology for Everyone

Hiraya Water is a smart water management startup building innovative solutions that address inefficiencies in the water sector. They aim to create the ultimate platform for water solutions in developing markets. Hiraya’s flagship product is R-TAP, an intelligent supply and pressure management system that helps water utilities reduce water losses and power consumption, and optimize their existing infrastructure.

Stephen Larcia, Founder of Hiraya Water, developed the idea of R-TAP while working in his previous job at a water company in Manila. He encountered a similar solution used in water districts

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