

ISIP UPDATES

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 problemsolving, to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

> "The United Nations recognizes the need to focus on the importance of micro-, small and mediumsized 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.







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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to efficiently manage their operations and reduce non-revenue water. Stephen thought of creating a similar product that fits in to the existing water system but is more affordable for Philippine consumers and can be used in a wider scale.

Rita Chua, President of Teresa Waterworks was considering options to address their residential subdivision's water issues. Impressed by the unique and cost-efficient solution that Hiraya Water offered, Teresa Waterworks decided to install the R-TAP. She said "We really didn't see any other solution prior to R-TAP that gave us anything more. One thing that was very interesting to us was that we are working with a Filipino company. We know a lot of the technological advances come from abroad, but we were very happy to know that things are happening in the Philippines, and we want to be a part of that trend to work with Filipino corporations".

Aside from Teresa Waterworks in Pampanga, Hiraya Water is also engaged with Tagaytay City Water District and Laguna Water District Aquatech Corporation where the R-TAP system is also utilized. These companies are Hiraya Water's clients since 2018, serving 34 barangays in Tagaytay City and four municipalities in Laguna.

Women Empowerment through Online **Cleaning Services**

To help bridge the gender gap of employment in the Philippines, Cleaning Lady aims to provide an alternative source of livelihood for women in underserved communities. Founded by Frances Feliciano and Oskie King in 2016, Cleaning Lady brings the convenience of a cleaning service to condominium residents and postconstruction sites in Metro Manila through their online platform. As of 2018, the social enterprise created 35 jobs for women from their partner communities

and has an average of 600 clients per

"I believe one of our primary contributions is providing additional income opportunities for these women to have access to better incomegenerating opportunities, augmenting the household income, leading to a more dignified life" said Oskie.

With Cleaning Lady, clients are able to easily schedule and book a cleaning service through their website, Facebook, Instagram, SMS or phone and enjoy quality cleaning service from trained and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)-certified cleaning ladies who use all-natural cleaning agents.

These are just some of the social enterprises in the Philippines trying to solve modern problems using modern and innovative solutions. Learn more about the social enterprises in the next installment of SE features.

How impact management makes better social enterprises



Rabayl Mirza of Business Call to Action mentors SolarSolutions Founders, Rey Guerrero and Raffy Concepcion, on measuring their business' social impact.



BUSINESS CALL TO ACTION

A Platform for Global Inclusive Business

BCtA developed an SDG lens impact management framework and a data collection method assessing the social and environmental performance of the companies

e inclusive

The BCtA Impact Lab is the leading platform for inclusive businesses to better measure and manage their impact.

Find out more about the Impact Lab here. Source: Business Call to Action

The core of a social enterprise (SE) lies on the impact it creates. SEs are described as business ventures created for a social purpose, mitigating or reducing a social problem or market

The Innovation for Social Impact Partnership (ISIP), through the Social Impact Accelerator, helps support the SEs by making sure they are clear and deliberate with their impact, at the same time gaining profit to sustain and scale their businesses.

The Impact Management Session is a partnership between ISIP and Business Call to Action (BCtA) which aims to provide guidance and training on impact measurement and management to SE founders. Through the sessions, SEs are expected to clearly identify the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) they are addressing and come up with an Impact Value Chain, with a corresponding impact management plan.

From March 11-15, Impact Management Sessions were conducted between the SE Founders of the Social Impact Accelerator Batch 1 and Rabayl Mirza, Impact Management Specialist of BCtA. This included one-on-one sessions between Rabayl and the SE founders.

"The session help[ed] me understand the importance of qualitative and quantitative data of impact monitoring and measurement" said Mark Gersava of Bambuhay. As Mark and Rabayl started working on the Impact Value Chain, Rabayl pointed out that in creating impact management plans, it is important to identify clearly what a company is capable of doing. In the case of Bambuhay, she suggested that instead of looking at the number of plastic straws that are foregone whenever Bambuhay bamboo straws are used, they can look into farmers' quality of life and track those numbers as they continue to grow.

"This is exactly the direction we want to go" says Raffy Concepcion of SolarSolutions. Raffy shared with Rabayl that they have used micro-narratives to highlight the impact their products and services deliver. Rabayl clarified what type of business model the company has and cautioned them to be transparent and ethical in featuring micro-narratives, especially since they operate in business-to-business (B2B) model. Rabayl added that showcasing stories makes a strong business case as it strengthens women's economic empowerment and boosts business in the community.

The sessions focused on the Modules 1-3 of BCtA's Impact Lab¹. Through the sessions, the SEs were able to refine and revise their respective Impact Value Chain and set clear targets for the next 6-12 months.



