

iMPACT

Insights & Inspiration for Social Innovation

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26 PLENTY OF FISH IN THE SEA RARE PROGRAM SEEKS TO RESTORE HABITAT

Philippines is a hotspot of biodiversity. When the country's marine ecosystems were being depleted, the Fish Forever program stepped in to create sustainable fishing practices. It's the story of how communities can restore the ecosystems that provide their livelihood if they work together.

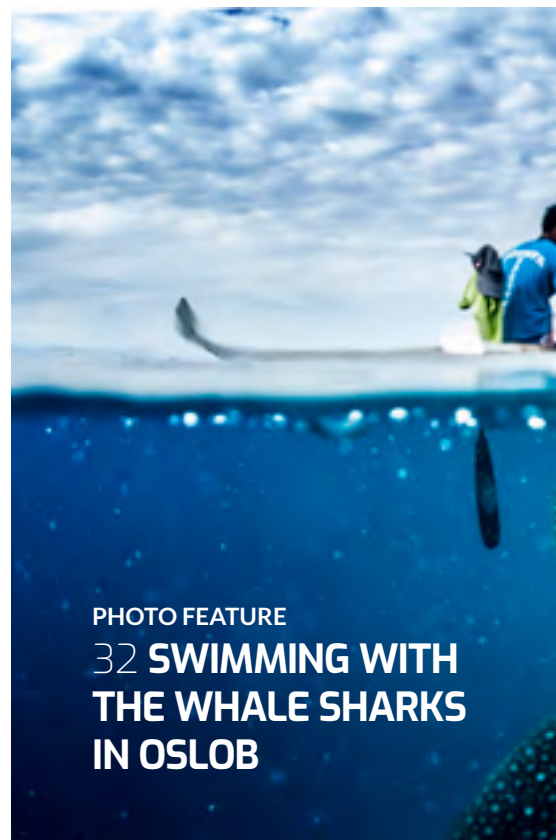


PHOTO FEATURE

32 SWIMMING WITH THE WHALE SHARKS IN OSLOB



20 A CASE FOR URBAN DENSITY

As cities constantly modernize and undergo massive development, the term "sustainable cities" seems like an oxymoron. Public transport and low-income housing often take center stage in city planning, but planners are sometimes forced to choose a path of development that may not always be in the best interests of all citizens. Dr. Kala Seetharam Sridhar weighs in on the importance of inclusive city planning.



48 DOING THE ROUNDS: CIRCULAR ECONOMY NEED OF THE HOUR

Circular economy, an alternative to linear economy, where resources are kept for as long as possible, provides an avenue for companies to tap into the full power of sustainability.

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50 GIVING FESTIVALS UP THEIR GAME

Giving festivals across the world leverage their unique cultures to create focused periods of giving. Meera Rajagopalan examines this phenomenon.

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Editor's Note

Dear reader,

As a race, human beings are quirky when it comes to perspectives. We tend to believe that we are at the median of things: we believe we are somewhere between good and evil. We believe the human race has as much time after, as before. We rarely pause and think, instead letting circumstances propel us into the future.

In the past decade or so, that has significantly changed. Individuals, communities and institutions are truly aware that status quo is not an option. Most of us realize, at some level, that unless we apply the metaphoric brakes, the planet might fall off the cliff.

Our sprawling cities attract not just talent, but also demand easier consumables—more food, easier packaging—so that the use of plastic and chemicals are deemed necessary. Like a hamster on a wheel, it seems we haven't had the time to stop, pause, and reflect. Now, there is no choice.

What this means is that every action of ours needs to be considered and deliberate, more so in terms of the environment. For instance, in Chennai, where I live, the water table, like the proverbial frog in the well, rises just a bit just after the rains, and plunges once summer sets in. Yet, we keep digging deeper for water. Fish have receded further from the coast; yet we continue to overfish. While the product packaging industry has made great strides toward more sustainable solutions, supermarket aisles are still dominated by plastic.

The tide, however, is turning, even as unsustainable practices, like a malignancy, try to encroach upon every aspect of our lives. Individuals, communities, corporations and governments are all looking at the future with an eye on sustainability. Admirable attempts have been made at every level: in this issue of iMPACT, we take a look at changing attitudes among fishing communities in the Philippines, through our cover story on RARE. We also look at individual responsibility with our story on Beth Terry, and the value that city planning can bring to the table, with Surat's resilience strategies. We also play referee as we feature a debate on what revised estimates on methane emissions from cows mean, and whether they will prompt a move toward plant-based diets.

Much more is to be done if we are to, simply put, save the Earth. But we would do well to keep in mind what actor Bruce Tenenbaum once wrote, "What really needs saving is not the planet, but, rather, ourselves. For while the Earth's demise is a very long way off, ours may be just around the corner."



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1 Global Health Summit

Kolkata, India | January 2-4

Organized by the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin, the Global Health Summit will focus on universal affordable healthcare.

2 Transforming Transportation 2018

Washington DC, USA | January 11

With the theme “Sustainable Mobility in the Digital Era”, Transforming Transportation 2018 organized by World Bank and the World Research Institute will address the impact of technology on the transport sector. It will also touch upon access to high quality and safe transport, improving transport systems efficiently and lowering the environmental footprint of the sector.

3 2018 SoCal Energy Water + Green Living Summit

California, USA | January 11

Public and private organizations will gather to discuss trends and solutions related to clean energy. Presented by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, the forum is also expected to convene hundreds of high school and college students to learn about combating climate change and utilizing clean energy.

4 Paris Hepatitis Conference

Paris, France | January 15-16

The conference will discuss new ways and methods to manage diseases such as hepatitis B and hepatitis C through intensive clinical research and access to treatment.

5 Bringing a Racial Equity Lens to Capacity Building

New York, USA | January 18

Grantmakers and funders are expected to gather to learn about racial biases in nonprofit capacity building, with specific reference to recent research. This is part one of a two-part workshop.

6 Microbiome Drug Development Summit Europe

Paris, France | January 29-February 1

Organized by Hanson Wade Limited, the Microbiome Drug Development Summit Europe will showcase leading industry case studies focused on enhancing the application of novel technologies to standardize results, accelerate target discovery and optimize the translation of microbiome research into safe and effective therapeutic products.

7 Seamless Thailand

Bangkok, Thailand | February 5-6

Seamless Thailand will bring together key experts, innovators and entrepreneurs to dive deep into how the payments, retail and e-commerce industries are going through rapid transformation over three tracks of content. The conference will feature over 60 financial, retail and e-commerce thought leaders from global institutions like Facebook, Big C, Siam Commercial Bank, IndoSuisse, and more who will take the stage to exchange ideas and share best practices.

8 Asia Pacific Sustainable Agriculture & Development Conference

Baguio, Philippines | February 6-9

Asia Pacific Sustainable Agriculture & Development Conference, presented by Echo Events, will talk about sustainable ways to improve the agricultural sector.

9 Ninth Session of the World Urban Forum

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia | February 7-13

With the theme “Cities 2030, Cities for All: Implementing the New Urban Agenda”, the Ninth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF9) will focus on the New Urban Agenda as a tool and accelerator for achieving Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.





10 EduTech Philippines 2018
 Manila, Philippines | February 21-22

EduTech Philippines 2018 will comprise inspirational keynotes from across the world, pioneering educators already changing education in their classrooms and technology leaders from education and innovative technology companies.

11 Solar Wind Earth Energy Trade Show
 Gwangju, South Korea | March 14-16

The trade show will showcase several breakthroughs in solar, wind and earth energy through conference programs in an effort to promote renewable energy as a solution in a climate change-battered world.

**12 Land and Poverty Conference 2018:
 Land Governance in an Interconnected World**
 Washington DC, USA | March 19-23

Participants from government, academia, civil society and the private sector will showcase latest research and practice on the diversity of reforms, interventions, and innovations in the land sector around the world.

13 4th Myanmar Infrastructure Summit 2018
 Yangon, Myanmar | March 20-22

Themed “Building an Inclusive, Integrated and Modernized Myanmar”, the summit will provide

a platform for potential foreign investors, infrastructure developers, technology providers and infrastructure funders to be updated on the development plans and policies of investing in Myanmar’s urban and rural infrastructure; to assess market opportunities and build potential business and investment networks with local policy makers and industry players.

14 Regional Innovation Forum
 Bratislava, Slovakia | March 22-24

Co-sponsored by the World Bank and the Government of the Republic of Slovakia in close collaboration with the Government of Austria, the Regional Innovation Forum aims to facilitate a systematic policy dialogue among European and Central Asian countries focused on the potentials of innovation and advanced technologies to encourage regional integration, job creation, and economic growth.

15 3rd GoGreen Summit
 Manila, Philippines | March 23-24

The 3rd GoGreen Summit with the theme “Let’s go for a Green Planet”, will discuss several advancements in the field of green energy, renewable energy, environmental engineering and green technology.

Year 2100 Could See the World Temperature Rise by

3.4°C



A new report from the Climate Action Tracker (CAT) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) revealed that the world could warm by up to 3.4°C, if greenhouse emissions persist.

This is a 0.2°C decrease from the 3.6°C projection back in November 2016. The decrease is a welcome improvement in the battle

on climate change, but is still far from the Paris accord target of 1.5°C.

Climate Action Tracker, an independent science-based assessment that tracks countries' emission commitments each year also reported that present policies are expected to reduce emissions by 1.7 GtCO₂e in 2030 compared to estimates in 2016. The

report also marks the first time since CAT began tracking back in 2009 that it has recognized a significant improvement in implementing climate policy action over a year—primarily in China and India.

“Over the last year, governments have made substantial steps in improving climate policies, and this has had a discernible effect on global emissions projections. For example, in the face of increasingly cheaper renewable energy, many are now actively moving away from coal. Electric mobility is also gaining momentum,” Niklas Höhne of NewClimate Institute said.

Despite the slight improvements in climate

tracking, the world is still tainted by the continuous degradation of the environment. An example of this is the melting of ice caps in the polar region. Three square meters of ice are lost for every ton of carbon dioxide emitted according to calculations—and another 1,000 gigatons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere would render the Arctic ice-free during the summer.

“In a short time, we need to see unprecedented reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and unequalled efforts to build societies that can resist rising climate impacts,” said Patricia Espinosa, executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Gender Equality Amidst Climate Action

Women are now more recognized in the battle against climate change thanks to a plan that was approved at the 23rd Conference of the Parties (COP23) in Bonn, Germany held from November 6-17.

The Gender Action Plan (GAP) aims to represent all genders in the Paris Agreement processes. It contains enhanced capacity-building and knowledge sharing and improved participation of women across all levels, especially within national delegations and implementations such as budgeting and monitoring.



“The GAP is the result of dogged work by people who understand that there are disproportionate impacts of climate change,” CEO of Sustainable Energy for All, Rachel Kyte said. “Unless we have more women in the delegations and in the ecosystem around the delegations, we are not

going to have the diversity of views that you need to properly understand the risks or properly understand the opportunities going forward.”

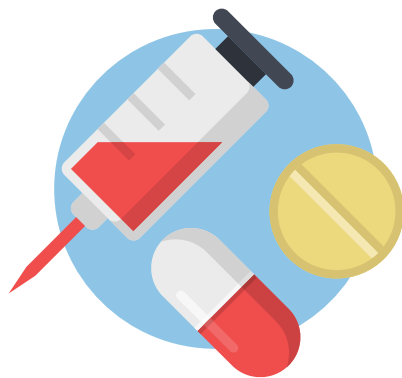
GAP is the result of the recognition of the vulnerability of women amidst climate change. According to the Food and

Agriculture Organization, 60 to 80 percent of women in developing countries are responsible for all household food production. If crops are affected by drought or flood, the livelihood of women takes a big hit.

“When drought or floods destroy the harvest, women and girls are often the first to reduce how much they eat—sacrificing their diet for the well-being of the rest of the family,” said Lim Hwei Mian, of the Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW).

A Data from the United Nations (UN) revealed that

\$100m fund announced to combat infectious diseases in Africa and Middle East



A \$100 million fund to combat infectious, preventable diseases such as river blindness and lymphatic filariasis (LF) was launched at the Reaching the Last Mile global health forum in Abu Dhabi, UAE on November 15.

The fund is sponsored by the Crown Prince and the Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan who will contribute \$20 million to the fund, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation with a share of \$20 million. The fund hopes to raise \$100 million to fast-track ongoing efforts to end river blindness and lymphatic filariasis in several countries in Africa and the Middle East.

“The fund reflects our long-term vision to save lives and put an end to neglected tropical diseases,” Mohammed said on his Twitter account. “There are inspirational models that have touched people’s lives, and their initiatives have left a clear mark on humanity.”

Twenty-nine countries are reportedly battling river blindness

(also known as onchocerciasis) while lymphatic filariasis (also known as elephantiasis) is present in 53 countries. Along with the fund, Mohammed and the Gates Foundation also announced the creation of a disease elimination and research institute to interpret data and technological advances into policy.

Reaching the Last Mile saw more than 200 government officials, experts, activists, social workers and philanthropists gather to discuss and strategize ways to tackle the challenges and new developments against infectious diseases. The fund and conference are managed by the END Fund, which aims to give importance to the most common neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) that is crippling the poorest people in the world.

“No human should suffer from a preventable disease; yet these neglected diseases continue to incapacitate millions of people in Africa and the Middle East. Elimination would help to lift millions more out of poverty, and drive a positive multiplier effect across the continent,” Mohammed stressed.

(from page 8) Gender Equality in the Midst of Climate Action

women in sub-Saharan Africa get water for a combined 16 million hours, while men spend only 6 million hours. Weather disturbances such as drought make water collection even harder for women and girls as they are forced to walk longer distances to collect water which, in turn, impedes their schooling.

The GAP recommends stronger presence of women in the combat against climate change. According to Osprey Orielle Lake, executive director of Women’s Earth and Climate Action Network, women act as local agents of change—with local knowledge of natural resources, they are often responsible for promoting sustainable usage of resources in their homes and communities.

The World Could Tap into 100% Renewable Energy by 2050



A study entitled “Global Energy System Based on 100% Renewable Energy Power Sector” that was released in the 23rd Conference of the Parties (COP23) in Bonn, Germany said that the world could possibly transition to 100% renewable energy by the year 2050—and create 36 million new jobs worldwide.

“100% renewable electricity system is an effective and urgently needed climate protection measure. A global zero emission power system is feasible and more cost effective than the existing system based on nuclear and fossil fuel energy,” said Hans-Josef Fell, president of the German nonprofit Energy Watch Group (EWC).

The study which was conducted by EWC and the Lappeenranta University of Technology (LUT) in Finland further states the transition to 100% percent renewable energy by 2050 is possible if strategies such as investing research on renewables, phasing out fossil fuel subsidies as well as government support are implemented.

Switching to renewable energy provides a silver lining in the cloud that hangs over the world in the form of climate change and its devastating effects. Transitioning to 100% renewable energy could bring greenhouse gas emissions in the electricity sector down to zero and reduce total losses in power generation.

The global economy will also benefit through renewable energy transition. Jobs in the sector are expected to more than double by 2050, from the current figure of 17 million to about 36 million.

We are only just **beginning to feel the impacts** of climate change. Any small amount of resilience we may **take for granted** today will be stretched to **breaking point** sooner than we may imagine.

Hugh Montgomery
Director of the Institute for Human Health and Performance
University College, London, on the impact of climate change on the health sector

The best photographs are **never taken, they're given.**

Giles Duley
Photographer
On his work, "Legacy of War", which showcased different sides of global conflict

There is **no reason** for women to trail behind men in social, economic, and political outcomes. Countries **need to do much more** to reach gender equality goals.

Gabriela Ramos
OECD Chief of Staff

**Knowledge
is easier
to develop,
but attitude
is hard to
change.**

Sara Zaini
Director of school and content development
on using education to solve youth
unemployment in Saudi Arabia.

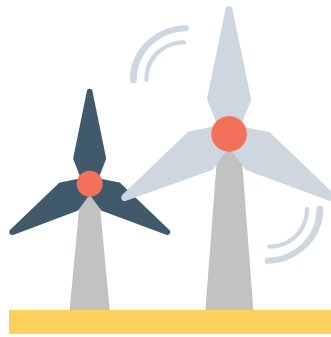
Unless the international community **tackles violence against women**, the world will not eradicate poverty or reach any of the other Sustainable Development Goals.

António Guterres
United Nations Secretary-General
On women empowerment

Dying during a heat wave is like a terror movie with 27 bad endings to choose from.

Camilo Mora
Geographer, University of Hawaii Manoa
On the effects of heat waves brought about by climate change

Renewable Energy in Numbers



Global wind sector investment reached a total of **\$109.6 billion.**

Renewable energy is expected to cover

more than 60%

of global power capacity growth over the next five years.

Global energy demand will



double

by **2030**

By **2050**, there will be

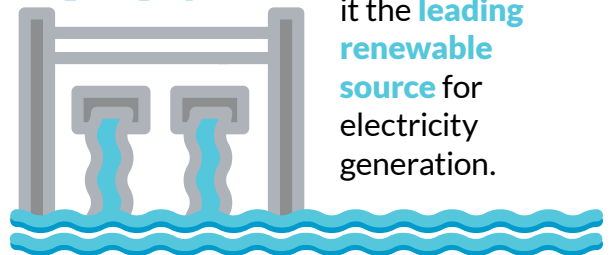


80% carbon reduction.

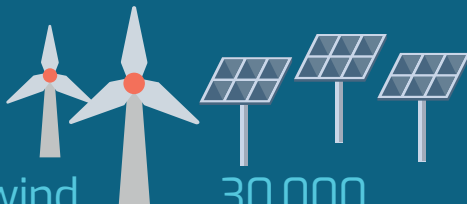
Hydropower supplies

71%

of all renewable electricity, making it the **leading renewable source** for electricity generation.



Over the next five years,



2.5 wind turbines

30,000 solar panels

will be installed every hour.

There are



9.8 million jobs in the renewable energy sector.

65 gigawatts

of solar capacity was added in 2017

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Crawling Toward a Sustainable Future

By Ian Jamotillo

Bugs—software developers don't like them; kids love them. Soon, they might be the ones to save us from the impending effects of climate change!

The continuous battle against climate change has led to the booming of the edible bug business. A report from the research firm, Global Market Insights revealed that the business had a share in the global market worth \$33 million in 2015, and is projected to grow up to 40% in 2023.

What does that really mean? Edible bugs could be the future of sustainable food.

Research says that bugs require less water than cows or pigs. Cows need about eleven times more water compared to turkey, pound for pound. Bovine methane emissions have become a serious cause for concern as well.

Edible bugs pack protein and the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) had stated that eating bugs could aid in lowering global malnutrition.

Several companies and businesses have already taken note, and introduced products. Eat Grub, a social enterprise



“Insects are one important solution as they offer a rich source of protein, amino acids, fatty acids and micronutrients.”

Giulia Muir
FAO expert on edible insects

with focus on sourcing and selling edible insects was formed in response to the growing issue of protein shortage and climate change, inspired by observation of insect-consuming communities in Asia and Africa.

“What we can do is change the mindsets of people around food. It can be something that tastes great, is great for us but is also great for the planet at the same time,” said Neil Whippey, co-founder of Eat Grub.

Aspire Food Group promotes cooked grasshoppers as an alternative source of food. Founded by five MBA students at Canada's McGill University in 2013, Aspire operates in the United States and Ghana and unveiled the world's first automated cricket farm in 2017.

“We believe that insects are the protein of the future,” Aspire states on their website, while describing themselves as a global leader in the “edible insect movement”.

Bugs as food may seem like a scary future. However, climate change should sound more terrifying, and the creepy crawlies may just be one way to tackle it. **i**

Never Go Out of Style: The Sustainable Way

If there's one thing that marks today's generation, it's the art of flaunting. On social media, posing as aesthetically as possible to gain more likes and shares, today's generation flaunts their skills and talents, hoping for attention.

Fashion is part of this whole “flaunting phenomenon” and over the course of the years, the fashion industry has undergone major changes to adapt to changes in society. Fashion is everyone's weapon in the social scene, but what about social and environmental responsibility? How does our fashion cope up in a world battered by climate change?


The fashion industry saw a doubling in global clothing sales since 2000, and the environment is taking the big hit. British designer Stella McCartney and record-breaking sailor Ellen MacArthur are urging the clothing business to reform its

wasteful, polluting ways by promoting the reuse and redesign of items such as T-shirts and jeans.

A report entitled “A new textiles economy: Redesigning Fashion’s Future” released by Ellen McArthur Foundation stated that textile production emits 1.2 billion tonnes of greenhouse gases annually, more than all international flights and maritime shipping combined. The report also revealed that the industry releases half a million tonnes of plastic microfibers (equivalent to more than 50 billion

“**Fashion** is allowed to be **fun**, and it’s allowed to be **sexy**,” said **McCartney**. “The **reality** is we just need to be a bit more **mindful** and **curious** about the way we’re consuming and have a level of **responsibility**.”

plastic bottles) into the ocean every year, adding to the number of causes behind climate change.

Battling the effects of climate change doesn’t have to sacrifice style, but according to McArthur Foundation, the fashion industry must abandon its “take-make-dispose” model and start using non-polluting materials that are designed to last instead of incinerating unwanted clothes or disposing them to landfill sites. The process could save the industry \$500 billion, according to the report. - **IJ** 

The Potent Power of Poop

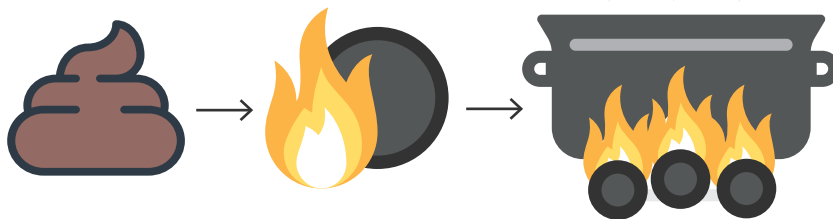
Filthiest in its natural state, but actually a catalyst for a future-ready world. That’s poop.

Faecal matter can play a key role in our battle against unsustainable practices, in a world where 31% of the population does not have access to any sanitation facility (figures from the World Health Organization).

In Kenya for example, one company is converting excess faecal waste into a usable fuel source for cooking and heating. Sanitation issues are hampering Kenya’s growth. An absence of toilets means that Kenyans are not just subject to the foul smell, they are also the target of public health issues and diseases, including diarrhoea.

Social enterprises such as Sanivation and Nakuru Water and Sanitation Services Company are keen on working toward solutions to tackle the sanitation crisis that is crippling Kenya.

“This is the 21st century and we are unable to create decent sanitation solutions—why is that? As a global community that’s embarrassing,” says Andrew Foote, founder of Sanivation.




Processing plants at Nakuru Water and Sanitation Services Company receive faecal waste from septic systems. The faecal matter is dried for two weeks, and then heated at extreme temperatures, to eliminate toxic gases and increase carbon output, which transforms the faecal matter to a flammable source of fuel. The process also eradicates the pungent odour, rendering it odourless.

The material is then turned into briquettes and sold for 50 US cents per kilogram. These briquettes are stated to burn longer with less smoke output than charcoal and firewood.

“It doesn’t have an odour, it cooks well, the fire burns well, you are able to cook fast and the briquettes burn for long. For example, if you are cooking 100 chapatis, when you get to

fifty you still have a fire unlike charcoal which you have to keep adding after cooking 30 chapatis,” says Grace Waka, a trader who uses the briquette made of faecal matter.

Sanivation on the other hand has a slightly different take on the sustainable fuel source. Their process starts by installing “blue box” plastic toilet containers in residents’ homes for free. They then charge the household 700 Kenyan shillings to collect the waste. Bacteria and other harmful substances are killed through heating until the waste is turned into an odourless charcoal ball.

According to Sanivation, using faecal matter as fuel helps reduce the use of trees, traditionally the main source of fuel for food. - **IJ** 

This section will feature interesting thought-provoking developments doing the rounds. To suggest an addition to this section, email editor@asiango.org

Of Balloons and Pumps, Tents and Chlorine

AidEx Innovation finalists dazzle

By iMPACT staff

BRUSSELS—A solar balloon that can provide power to remote areas, especially during disaster scenarios took home the AidEx Aid Innovation Challenge award, while the finalists were ideas that ran the gamut: an all-weather reversible portable tent for the homeless, a portable solar-powered chlorination kit, and a low-cost rope and washer irrigation pump.

The winner, Zephyr Solar, was announced on November 15, during the AidEx 2017 conference in Brussels, after a live presentation by the four finalists. Zephyr Solar received a €2000 prize and a free exhibition stand for AidEx 2018.

Speaking on the award, Julie Dautel, co-founder of Zephyr Solar, said, “This award brings credibility to our solution for the humanitarian sector and a lot of targeted visibility.” She added, “It’s also a great opportunity to present the solution next year at the international humanitarian fair.”

The 7th AidEx Challenge saw hundreds of applications, which were narrowed down by a panel. Live pitching on the day was judged by four reputed entrepreneurs.

Earlier winners have included GreenCo Water (a flat pack water tank), Hope (a blood donation mobile app), India Impex (a solar powered lamp) and MedAlert (an HIV medication reminder).

Another award, the AidEx Humanitarian Hero Award was won by Dr Michael Kühnel, an Austrian doctor who has volunteered for the Red Cross for 18 years, in some of the most conflict-ridden places in the world. Entries for the 2018 AidEx Innovation Challenge will open early 2018.



A look at this year's innovation finalists.

WINNER

Zephyr Solar

Power is in the Air



The Zephyr Solar Balloon is a balloon with lightweight solar panels, which produce enough energy to power ground activities and supply on-board equipment.

A search for a reliable and sustainable power supply during times of disaster led the Zephyr team to their solar balloon. Julie Dautel and co-founder Cedric Tomissi are both industrial designers, and this, Dautel says, helped them zone in on a solution to the problem of the lack of reliable energy in crisis situations.

Dautel says their balloon is strongly influenced by flying objects like kites and planes, but also incorporates some principles of the movement of boats and even animals.

While the solution may seem simple, it took nearly three years for the

seed of an idea to fructify. Apart from the design, the time was also used to find interested customers, adequate financing, and basically, “transform the project into a company,” says Dautel. Internal tests were performed last April for a week, with several variations: different arrangements of solar panels, with WiFi, cameras and a lamp on the balloon as well. The balloons come in various sizes: from ones providing as low as 200W to as much as 10 KW.

The company already has its first customer: the French Red Cross.

Apart from disaster scenarios, the team has also been approached by three other markets: outdoor festivals, aviation security, and telecom payers.

Zephyr Solar is at <http://zephyr.solar/en>

FINALISTS:

WeatherHYDE by billionBricks

Safe, all-weather tent for displaced families

WeatherHYDE fills an important gap in bettering the lives of those without or in between homes. It was developed by the CEO and co-founder of billionBricks, Prasoon Kumar, after 9,000 families became homeless following a riot in North India. When the Nepal earthquake occurred, it was observed that three interventions were required for shelters: first responders set up tarpaulins, followed by transitional shelters during the rains, followed by winter clothing. Kumar and his team developed WeatherHYDE as a single all-weather shelter, and after successful trials, raised over USD 100,000 on crowdfunding platform Kickstarter.

Asa Johnson, project manager, weatherHYDE, says women have often mentioned how the tents offer them a safe and private place to rest and recover, especially for themselves and their children.

WeatherHYDE, which comes in a size of about 5 ft by 6 ft, can be reversed—the reflective surface is turned inwards during harsh winters, trapping the body heat, while in summer, it is reversed, reflecting the sun's heat. The tent can be set up by a single person in less than fifteen minutes, and requires no ground anchoring. It can shelter a family of five, and trials in five countries have shown very promising results, said Johnson.

On their website, anyone can buy or gift a weatherHYDE tent, for recreational use, as well as a humanitarian gesture to a homeless family. RFID tracking on each tent ensures transparency and tracking of usage.

Interest for the product has also emerged from other sectors—for example, for use as small kindergarten spaces and as feeding/changing areas for women.



For more information, visit www.weatherhyde.org and www.billionbricks.org

FINALISTS:

Rainmaker from Pump Aid

Reliable water through the year

When Malawi, Africa, suffered a bad harvest last year, it left over 6.5 million people classified as “food insecure”. What was incredible was the fact that the whole country was literally sitting on abundant water resources. The country’s small-scale farmers were hugely dependent on rain and hardly used ground irrigation. When Pump Aid’s project on household access to water brought forth a locally manufactured household pump, the team considered a similar approach for small-scale farmers.

Duncan Marsh, director of programmes for Pump Aid says the Rainmaker, a simplified version of a household rope and washer pump, can be manufactured and installed locally.

Some of its advantages are its ease of use; variant flow for different irrigational purposes; minimal moving parts, which mean that repairs will be rare; portability; and speed of irrigation, which is four times faster than the current method.

Widespread adoption of the pumps will also lead to year-round farming and



consequent increase in food production. “Because levels of irrigation in Malawi are low, the potential market for the Rainmaker is big. Malawi has huge reserves of underground water, much of it within 10 metres of the surface, so if access to it can be improved the

potential for Malawi’s farming community is immense,” says Marsh.

Rainmaker retails for \$60-\$70, its portability means that farmers often buy one pump and share it, opting for a personal pump after one season.

For more information, visit www.pumpedaid.org

FINALISTS:

E’CHLO, from Photalia

Safe, drinking water on the go



Working in remote areas, one of the most common issues can be the availability of safe potable drinking water. It is also one of the

major public health concerns of the world. Chlorination is known to be one of the most effective methods of water disinfection. It is in

this context that Photalia, a subsidiary of solar solutions company Vergnet, came up with the E’CHLO kit, which uses the electrolysis of a solution of water and salt, powered by a photovoltaic generator without a battery, via a production controller. The chlorine is locally produced, and has a residual effect, which protects the water during transport and storage as well. The kits, which come in varied sizes, can produce from 12 to 165 litres per day.

Francois Pelcran, project manager, says that while other solutions for water disinfection such as UV treatment and microfiltration

exist, they are less reliable than the E’CHLO kit and also have a shorter effect. “Using our electrochlorination innovation E’CHLO, people without any access to potable water will be able to treat their own water, in the most hygienic and environmentally friendly way,” says Pelcran.

E’CHLO can also be used to disinfect soil and medical equipment. Photalia also considers the kit as a possible income-generating activity through cooperatives or micro-enterprises. The price of the 2g/l kit is 2650€ and the 5g/l kit costs 3631€.

More information is at www.photalia.fr

Precision Agriculture Can Be Part of Solution to Food Security

Amidst increasing population and concerns of agricultural sustainability, precision agriculture may provide solutions, writes Raghavan Sampathkumar.

The question “How to feed 9 billion by 2050?” may sound dire and terrifying to some.

It is indeed a critical concern, especially in light of the fact that the world faces huge pressure to reduce its externalities and its consequent ecological footprint.

The irony is that the world’s food production can feed everyone; yet at least 800 million go hungry to bed every day. Climate change-induced natural disasters, inclement weather that affects crop production, loss of cultivable land, price volatility of commodities, civil and communal wars, and unfavourable socio-economic situations and geo-political instability are influencing the agri-food policy and regulatory environments. Consequently, there is enormous pressure on agriculture to meet the growing demands for safe, quality and affordable food to be produced from limited resources.

While it may seem apocalyptic at first glance, I am more optimistic that innovations will continue to help meet such necessities sustainably.

Precision agriculture is one area that can help achieve that, in conjunction with other sustainable practices. Precision agriculture is exactly what it sounds like: farming using advanced technologies, including geospatial, so that crops and soils receive just what they need. For instance, a farmer can take samples of soil through a grid across her land and calculate the nutrient value of each small “tile”, and use fertilizers just as needed.

Not only does this cut costs, it also ensures that plants are not over-fertilized and avoids leaching, leading to more sustainable production.

For the past decade, the precision agriculture ecosystem has been expanding rapidly with technology developers working with producers, processors, retailers, certification bodies, civil society, governments, academia and research institutions. However, most of this occurred mainly in the developed world. In the developing world, where three-fourths of the global population lives, precision agriculture is still in its nascent stages.

The Clouds with the Silver Linings: Rain and Data

Agriculture remains and will always be dependent on two kinds of “clouds”: one for rain and another for data. The latter is key to improving resilience and enhancing its capability to insulate itself from the vagaries of the former. Farming is moving fast on the information superhighway and it’s no longer a “sow seeds and reap produce” story but a “plant sensors and harvest data” one.

Precision agriculture and AgTech innovations fall under the umbrella of geospatial technologies that straddle multiple domains such as food, health, environment, conservation, and disaster



Raghavan Sampathkumar is a seasoned food and agribusiness professional with experience in various subsectors including agro commodities, international trade, agri-inputs, biotech and animal nutrition. He can be contacted at vnsraghav@gmail.com

management. For example, it can help accurately measure, map, and track forest areas and help in efficient land use planning, administration and management of natural resources. Palm oil plantations in Malaysia and Indonesia widely use these technologies already as a critical component of their commitment to sustainable production.

From Sowing to the Reaping: Benefits for the Entire Value Chain

AgTech can serve as the foundation of agricultural sustainability, by itself or in combination with genetics, agronomy, and business concepts including marketing.

Apart from improving yield, AgTech technologies lead to significant improvements in efficiency of input-use (water, fertilizers, chemicals), huge cost savings and conservation of precious resources (e.g. water, nutrients). Done right, they also help with risk management (weather, price and market) improvement in food quality and ultimately, profitability of farmers.

However, there are huge monetary and non-monetary benefits for the communities as the eco-footprint of farming is significantly reduced and its associated problems such as algal blooms, bio-accumulations, contaminations and pollution are reduced.

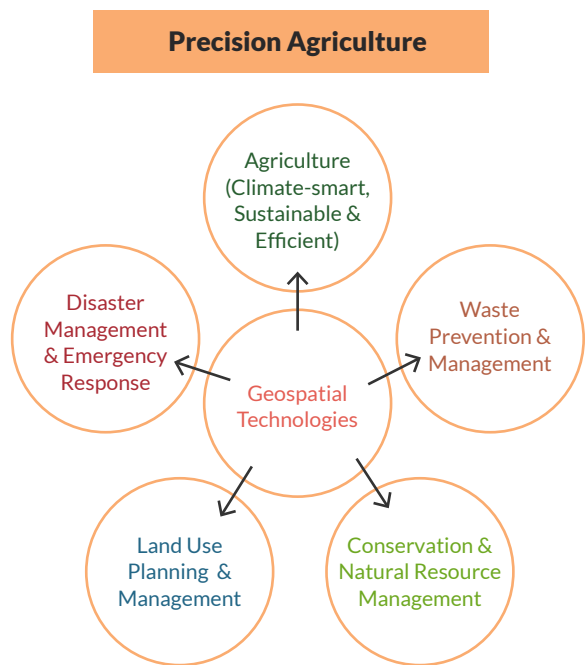
While using geospatial data is quite common in hydro projects, recently, in Rajasthan, India, a micro-level community-driven water conservation project successfully used various geo-intelligence, remote sensing and mapping data in

the baseline analysis. The data offered valuable insights into local cropping patterns, soil profile, and land use.

Another example is in catering to area-specific requirements of communities using geo-intelligence based technologies. Governments can use soil profiling, satellite imagery and mapping results to assess nutrient deficiencies in a particular area and tailor-make products such as area-specific fertilizer mixtures for crops, which can help promote judicious and balanced use of fertilizers rather than indiscriminate blanket applications. Similarly, area-specific mineral mixtures for livestock feeds based on nutrient deficiency maps can help reduce input costs for producers.

Application of these technologies can help enhance early warning systems at the community level for better forecasting of pest and disease infestations and providing extension services. Yield mapping for strategically important crops on a narrower geographic basis can help governments improve accuracy of production forecasts and ensure sufficient availability of food stocks to guard against price volatility. This is critical in Asia and Africa, where countries are still vulnerable to any production, supply or price shocks of key food commodities, which disproportionately affect the underprivileged.

Governments, civil societies, regulators and policy makers can rely on these precision farming technologies to make data-driven decisions and policies; analyse past trends accurately to help future forecasts better and



more reliable; drive developmental efforts more efficiently; and improve efficiency of delivering targeted support measures.

The Precise Future: AgTech Inroads in Asia

The precision agriculture sector is growing over 12% annually and is set to cross US\$ 5.5 billion by 2020¹. However, in the developing world, the industry remains primitive and newer applications are evolving day by day. Asia, in particular, is just waking up to the use of these applications. Though existing policies and regulatory frameworks (for example, licenses and permits for using UAVs or drones) in developed countries can serve as references, Asia's agri-food landscape is different. Hence, it is important to understand the local situation and crop sectors for making scientifically-sound, evidence-based and unbiased policies and regulations.

Though precision agriculture and AgTech applications have immense potential to contribute towards sustainable food production, they cannot serve as the panacea for all issues facing agriculture. A balanced regulatory framework and a conducive policy environment that encourages innovation and farmers' choices and a dispassionate examination of the affordability of such options are essential. **i**

¹ Global Precision Farming Market - By Technology, Application, Geography, Trends, Forecast - 2017 - 2022 by Mordor Intelligence, December 2017



Photo Credit: Pixabay.com

A Case for Urban Density

Dr. Kala Seetharam Sridhar, professor at the Centre for Research in Urban Affairs, Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), commutes about twenty-five kilometres one-way for work, in Bengaluru, an Indian city that has inspired thousands of memes on its traffic woes.



It would seem her commute bucks the surprising trend that her current research on the effective labour market has identified: Commute time has decreased over the past few years in Bengaluru.

The two research projects, one funded by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) and the other, by the Azim Premji Research Grants Foundation, both slightly overlapping, plot the effective labour market in cities by using commute time as a measure of the same. The study has shown that the average commute time of the Bengalurean has decreased. She credits it to a few factors including, but not limited to, the Bengaluru Metro Rail and the dominance of single income households, and self-owned businesses.

Sridhar is also working on a book on the urban transport governance initiative, in association with the World Resources Institute, to examine participatory governance in urban transport.

Sridhar has written several books, refereed journal articles, and is a member of expert committees on urban development. She has done extensive research for the Asian Development Bank and was senior advisor to Global Development Network's global project on urbanization, and is empanelled as a visiting Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) Chair Professor of Indian studies in foreign universities.

Recently in Chennai for the Urban Thinkers Campus, organized by the Madras Chamber of Commerce and



Industry in association with UN-Habitat, Sridhar spoke about the need for denser cities, which is traditionally viewed unfavourably. She, however, says that not having a higher Floor Space Index (FSI, also called Floor to Area Ratio or FAR), is simply poor public economics.

She rues the fact that India's FSI is pegged between one and four in most cities. She bats for an increase, or at least, an open mind for increases in the same, for better urbanization, keeping in mind the population that the city serves. She cites the example of Shanghai, whose FSI goes up to eight.

In an interview with **Meera Rajagopalan**, she shares her research, ideas, and plans for more inclusive city planning.

1. What brought you to the field of urban planning? What about it interests you?

First, cities intrigue me. They are the centres to where the poor flock in large numbers in the hope that it will improve their lives.

Second, space, region and cities interest me since in the context of the United States, where I first started my entry into this field, movement of a firm from one state to another,

just across the state border, one mile one way or the other, enables firms to save millions of dollars, given differential state policies regarding firm location and incentives offered.

Third, in the context of developing countries and Asia, cities are the future, since they contribute substantially to their economies, have better physical, knowledge and social infrastructure, and make knowledge sharing, learning possible, especially due to their density. In the context of India, cities contribute to nearly two-thirds of the country's GDP. I am very fond of seeing people in large numbers and amazed at how dense Asian cities are. I also think that density has a lot of advantages in terms of reducing crime and increasing economic productivity. That is certainly the one thing that explains my love for cities.

2. Cities are bursting at the seams with influx of people and inevitably, infrastructure development follows city development. Eventually, the poor seem to get short shrift in the whole process. They are often considered "the problem". Looking

♥ In the context of India, cities contribute to nearly two-thirds of the country's GDP. I am very fond of seeing people in large numbers and amazed at how dense Asian cities are. I also think that density has a lot of advantages in terms of reducing crime and increasing economic productivity."

at it from an equitable angle, how has this influx affected the urban poor? What are some of the unique challenges that they face because of this rapid urbanization?

As cities expand, the periphery of the cities gets populated by migrants. I found that Indian cities suburbanized significantly during 1981-1991, using Census data. However during 1991-2001, many Indian cities centralized, rather, since many towns and outlying peripheral areas of cities were merged into the central city. The well-known examples are Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike which became the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, in 2006, and Chennai which merged surrounding municipalities

“There is a need to relax building height restrictions in India’s cities, such that the poor can live in the central parts, where their jobs presumably are located.”

and became the greater Chennai area recently, with an area of 1,189 sq kms. Hence whether or not cities burst at the edges depends on how the municipal corporation is defined. The poor do not always get short-changed in the process, as they also get access to opportunities if they have the appropriate skills, or at least they acquire some. Further, the future of their children in cities is better since they have access to much better educational opportunities in the form of schools and colleges.

While I agree that the poor are considered “the problem” because they are considered to be responsible for electricity theft, unaccounted-for water and encroaching on public land, they indeed contribute a lot in the form of their services as cooks, drivers, maids, and other essential occupations, to the cities to where they migrate.

“I envision the Asian cities of 2030 to be driven by people and information and communications technology.”

This is not to deny the challenges the urban poor face—they lack food security, unlike the rural poor who grow their own food; the urban poor face economic challenges, given the costs of living, housing, health care and transport which are higher than those faced by the rural poor. In addition, the urban poor also face social exclusion, given they cannot freely walk into anybody’s house and ask for help.

4. Are second-tier cities the way forward, as there might be elbow room to get it right in those cities?

Second-tier cities may be viewed as the way forward, given the primary cities such as Chennai, Bengaluru are choking as their infrastructure is crumbling under the weight of population. It may be noted that the primacy of Bengaluru and Chennai in their states is unquestionable. Bengaluru is more than eight times bigger than the second biggest city in Karnataka, Mysuru, while Chennai is about four times bigger than Tamil Nadu’s second biggest city, Coimbatore. Given their primacy there is a case for decongesting them. However, there is also an acute need for investing in these large cities’ infrastructure and public transport, such that they may leverage on their density and strengths.


In India, to begin with, when urban development started happening, investment

in the large metropolitan areas was neglected, since “rural development” was the emphasis in the newly independent India, and towns were developed as long as they “were located at a minimum distance” from the metropolitan cities of the country. Hence, since the times of independence, the second-tier cities have been promoted, while the metropolitan cities neglected, with the effects showing now.

Second-tier cities should be developed seriously, such that they are relatively more attractive than large cities, for residents and businesses to move. Firms and households will move to secondary cities, only if wage, attrition, training and land costs are lower there compared to large cities, since the agglomeration effects (advantages of similar firms located in proximity to each other) are likely to be absent in second-tier cities to begin with.

5. How will the Asian cities of 2030 be? Better infrastructure and urban conglomerates, or is it going to be something completely different?

I envision the Asian cities of 2030 to be driven by people and information and communications technology. As I have argued elsewhere, city residents have to be more tolerant if cities have to function smoothly. For instance, if commuters can be tolerant and patient, they can share cab rides, which decongests the traffic. If drivers are more tolerant towards pedestrians, we can reduce noise pollution resulting from too much noise. ICT tools such as smart phones will guide the traffic, as will smart technology guide the urban households who remotely monitor their gadgets and children.

While cities will continue to be thriving hotspots of academics, business and innovation, I expect them to be characterized by both better infrastructure, but powered by more tolerant people and innovative ICT. 

The Power of One: Beth Terry's Plastic-Free Life

As organizations take a leap into green practices, here's one woman's story on living sans plastic

By Meera Rajagopalan



Photo Credit: Stephen Loewinsohn

Beth Terry, 53, lives in California and works as an accountant. She also lives a plastic-free life, and has been doing so for the past ten years. That means that she does not buy any new plastic, if she can help it. And for the most part, she can.

As we take in and wonder about the sustainability of life without plastic, the fact that a person can go plastic-free is mind-boggling. We might also revert to that old question: What difference can one person make?

It turns out plenty. Through her website and various campaigns, Terry has encouraged hundreds of people to embrace a plastic-free life. She has ensured that companies start putting in place sustainable practices, and has campaigned relentlessly for changes in policies.

Terry, however, says the whole exercise was meant to be a personal quest, nothing more. “In the beginning, it was just about me,” she says, on the phone from Maryland, U.S. “I began with the thought, ‘How can I be part of the solution?’ I didn’t even know much plastic I was using, so I started collecting it.”

What she realized when she saw it all logged, was that she (and all of us) use a lot of plastic. In one 2010 TEDx video, Terry brings in a bag with all the plastic she used that year: just under four pounds (1.8 kilograms). An average American now throws out many times that, around 185 pounds (84 kilograms), according to a 2014 estimate.

When she started the plastic-free life, she catalogued her plastic use online on a blog called www.fakeplasticfish.com. “The whole reason I got on a website was to do it publicly, so I would be accountable,” she says. “But a lot of people were interested in doing this too, and would ask me questions.”

Now her Facebook page has 44,000 followers and her Twitter feed, just short of 10,000. Her blog has morphed into a resource site for people looking at minimizing plastic use in



Trash in San Francisco Bay
Photo Credit: Beth Terry

I knew I wasn't going to change the world, but I still thought it was important for me to do it."



Beth Terry

Beth Terry's website is www.myplasticfreelife.com

Photo Credit: Micaela Preston

their own lives. Her book, "Plastic-Free How I Kicked the Plastic Habit and How You Can Too" talks about ways and tips to live a plastic-free life.

One of her earliest successes was in getting Clorox, Inc. to start recycling Brita water filters in the U.S., something that was being done in Europe. Terry started a signature campaign and a filter donation campaign, through which she collected about 16,000 of the former and 611 of the latter, set up a web site, TakeBackTheFilter.org, and a year later, Clorox announced a plan to take back and recycle used Brita cartridges.

She also works with organizations to help amplify their cause. She has collaborated on plastic-free campaigns with The Story of Stuff, a community that promotes sustainable living, most famous for its viral video on consumerism.

Terry is involved with Australia's Plastic-Free July, developed by the Earth Carers Waste Education Team. The campaign is aimed at getting people



a taste of the plastic-free life. She says that as an organization, they can take it further than she ever could. "I'd like to think I helped plant that seed, as an individual," she says.

It hasn't been easy, though. One of the things she has had to do was give up on pre-packaged food. "But it's healthier for me as well, so it's a win-win," she says.

While the usual suspects—carry bags, groceries in plastic, coffee cups—were easily tackled, she says one of the most difficult things to give up was her favourite wine. "I realized that the cork they used was plastic, not wood, and that was tough to give up," she says.

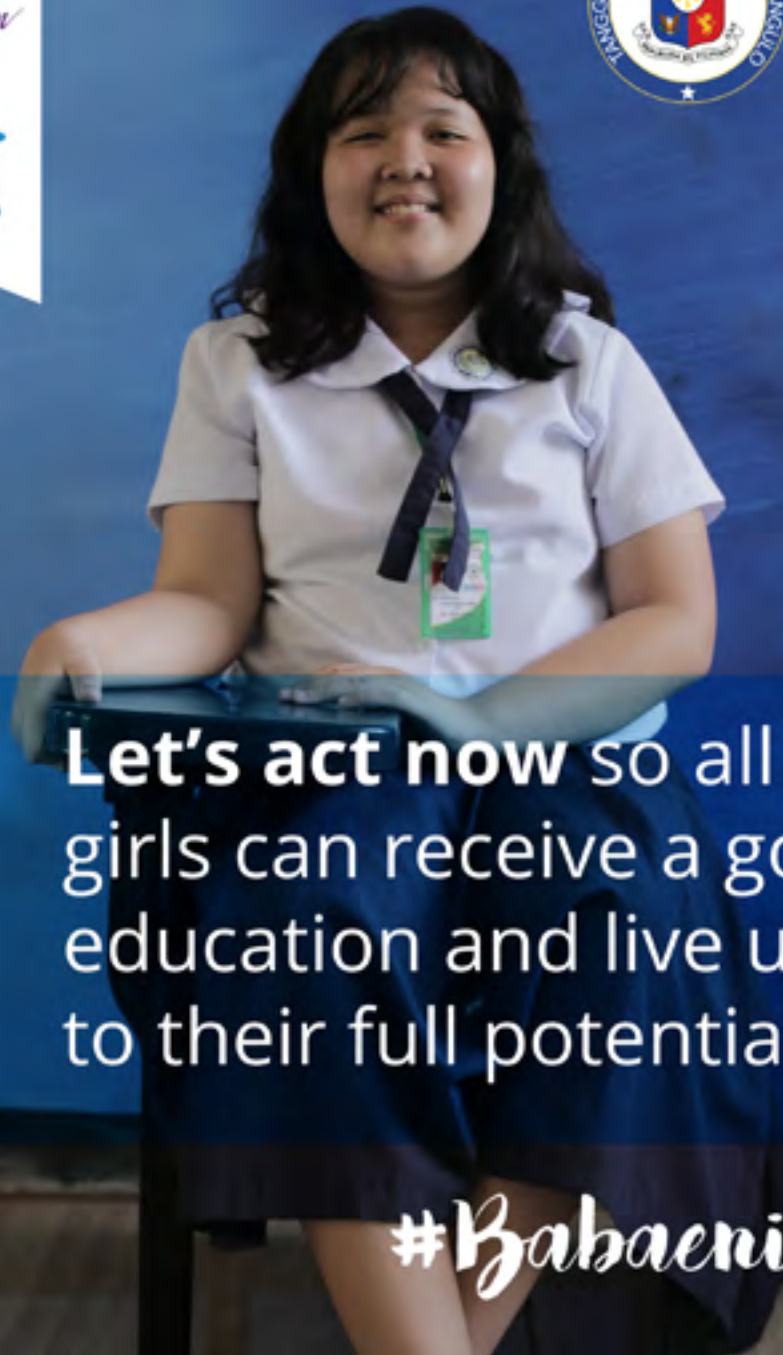
She suggests people start small, instead of making a giant leap into a completely plastic-free

life. "Start small—first cut out plastic bags, and then move up." She also suggests cataloguing plastic use, to visualize it better.

Terry rues the fact that while there is more awareness on the sustainability front, there are also many more plastic products in the market, many of them unnecessarily so. She cites the example of single-serve cookies, individually wrapped in plastic.

On her web site, users post questions about where to find non-plastic equivalents of everyday items: ice-cube trays and electric kettles, for instance. Amazingly, there are several recommendations. It's a tight-knit community of people who would like to go plastic-free.

As we involve ourselves in larger campaigns and projects to promote sustainability, it is also important to realize why we do so. Terry's initial words come to mind: "I knew I wasn't going to change the world, but I still thought it was important for me to do it." 



Let's act now so all girls can receive a good education and live up to their full potential.

#Babaenihan

What is the **Babaenihan** Campaign?

Babaenihan is a campaign to raise awareness about the urgency of addressing teenage pregnancies through investments in education, health and economic opportunities.

Teenage pregnancy is on the rise in the Philippines. Of the 10 million girls aged 10-19 years old today, 1 out of 5 girls will be a mother by age 19 (NDHS, 2013). Teenage mothers become more vulnerable to poverty

and exclusion. Teenage pregnancy takes away her capacity to achieve her own goals and contribute to her country's development.

Urgent action is needed to enable women and girls to expand their capabilities, secure their reproductive health and rights, find decent work, and contribute to sustainable economic growth.



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Plenty of Fish in the Sea

RARE program seeks to restore habitat

By Meera Rajagopalan

Philippines is a hotspot of biodiversity. When the country's marine ecosystems were being depleted, the Fish Forever program stepped in to create sustainable fishing practices. It's the story of how communities can restore the ecosystems that provide their livelihood, if they work together.

Twelve chairpersons of the Barangay Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council of the MIMAROPA region of Philippines stand around a table, desperately collecting plastic fish using tongs, spoons and shovels. They have just thirty seconds to report their catch to the "Fisheries Manager." They notice the presence of a plastic fishing boat, representing a commercial boat, and most of them protest its presence, but no one moves to stop it. They fish as much as they can, avoiding a portion of the table marked out as the Marine Protected Area (MPA). When the clock runs out, the Fisheries Manager asks them what could have been different, and they now express their dissatisfaction at the commercial boat and suggest someone act as law enforcement to stop it. They

also recommend a new rule: ban on juvenile catch. The waters, i.e., the table, are opened for fishing, and the chairpersons resume fishing. Two of them net juvenile fish, despite the restrictions and are promptly fined for the same. Another is charged with the duty of stopping the commercial boat. At the end of the game, the chairpersons are excited.

This is no mere game, though. For the players, typically fishers, it is a window into the future, if fishing practices continue as they do. It's a warning of the lurking dangers of unsustainable practices. It's just one of the pieces of the program employed by RARE Philippines, to ensure that fishing the archipelago remains sustainable.

Modified from materials from the Environmental Defense Fund, the Fish Game is typically played



A Fish Game in progress



Fish landing in Mercedes Town in Bicol
Photo Credit: Jason Houston, RARE



in conjunction with a related game called “Fisher Cards” where participants are asked to identify good and bad fishing/ fisheries management practices. The Fish Game is used by RARE to “help communities think about different fishery management strategies, how effective they are, their challenges etc., and start thinking about what they need to do to improve things,” says Rocky Sanchez

Tirona, vice president, RARE Philippines.

Philippines is one of the world’s largest fishing nations, with 2.3 million tonnes of catch a year, and more than \$3.3 billion in revenue generated. About 85% of the fishers are small-scale fishers who have seen the catch move further away with each passing year.

While the global sustainable seafood market hit \$11.5

billion in retail sales in 2016, markets in Asia are now warming up to the concept. While developing countries produce 80% of the seafood, they only account for 11% of the sustainable seafood market, according to the 2016 report “The SSI Review: Standards and the Blue Economy.”

RARE, known worldwide for their conservation efforts in fields as varied as species protection,



Women at savings club meeting
Photo Credit: Yasmin Arquiza RARE

cotton farming and watershed management, commenced operations in the Philippines in 2010, when it focused on marine habitat protection. However, it soon became apparent that marine habitat was but one node of a complex web of factors that was the fishing ecosystem in the country.

Fish Forever, a partnership between the Environmental Defense Fund, RARE and the Sustainable Fisheries Group was launched in the Philippines in 2014, with the extended brief of tackling overfishing, illegal fishing, dynamiting and habitat destruction and ecosystems through a two-pronged approach.

One, the program works with the local municipal

units to create special fishing zones that are exclusive to local fishers who satisfy stringent requirements and no-take zones, where fish supplies is replenished. Two, they work with the communities, who are incentivized to fish more responsibly through a variety of programs aimed at them.

The impact of the program is slowly becoming apparent. Bindoy is a municipality of about 40,000 people, and it was the location of one of RARE's first projects. Bindoy is also known for Mantalip Reef, and this was what RARE's first project sought to save. The municipality has now seen an increase in available fish. Across the country, for

the period 2015-2017, fish biomass increased in nine out of the 12 latest Fish Forever sites.

"These things do take time, and in a few years, we hope to see a lot of positive impact," says Yasmin Arquiza, senior manager, communications and events, RARE Philippines.

RARE's Fish Forever program works at several levels to ensure that fishing remains sustainable, while fixing the focus on the most important stakeholder: the fisher. RARE has agreements with 38 municipal units where the Fish Forever program is being implemented. While it is a long way to go for all 900 coastal government units to adopt the program,



Fish processing underway
Photo Credit: RARE

changes in national policy seem within reach.

Support from the local administration is encouraging, as RARE strongly believes that change must come from within communities.

Fellows in Government Step Up

RARE’s model has the Conservation Fellow as the central changemaker, who works for two years to operationalize the Fish Forever program in their municipalities. While the initial fellows came from civil society and nonprofits, RARE appoints fellows from within the government since 2015.

“This works better in terms of sustainability

of the program,” says Arquiza. “There is also some accountability on the government’s part.”

One fellow, Vincent Dueñas, is a fisheries technician in the Municipal Agriculture Office of Cortes, in Surigao del Sur, a province on the eastern coast of Philippines. He talks about the trouble he had with fishers who used dynamite. He also talks about his journey as a RARE Conservation Fellow, and how participation from the community turned the tide in his favour. Duenas continues to work in the local government, and in fact, Cortes has become of the most successful Fish Forever sites in the Philippines, bagging the

inaugural government award for sustainability, the Malinis at Masaganang Karagatan award.

Community Matters

The community of Cortes, which won the award, did so not only because of its participation in the Fish Forever program but also because it has been proactive in encouraging a community-led solution towards sustainable fishing. The mayor of Cortes, William M. Angos, himself a scuba diver, has long championed the cause of restoration of marine habitats.

That the involvement of the communities is essential is driven home time and again across all RARE sites. RARE’s



The range of processed fish from Fishers and Changemakers, Inc.

“When they (the fishers) saw the final products, they forgot about the money but valued the sense of pride and dignity gained from producing the high-quality product.”

Dhang Tecson
Fishers and Changemakers, Inc.

program works directly with the fishers, who receive exclusive fishing rights in Managed Access Areas in return for adherence to strict regulations, including registration of boats and fishers.

The Conservation Fellows often travel to the villages and work with the community to identify problems, part of which is the Fish Game. They then work out strategies to tackle the identified problems.

One of the campaigns of RARE has been to support the government’s push for fisher registration. “Many of these fishing villages have no access to services. This is likely the first ID card the fishers will have and so that’s exciting for them,” says Arquiza.

This drive, in conjunction with government policies that promote registration have resulted in an increase in fisher registration. For instance, the community of Looc received a prize from the Department of Agriculture—Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources for their good fisher and boat registration. The number of registered fisheries went up by 33% from 1055 registrations in 2016-17.

End-to-End Assistance

What makes RARE’s efforts stand out is the fact that it is fisher-centric. Two of its initiatives—savings clubs and creating market links and value addition to fish—have received great response.

The first was the result of understanding the home economics of fishers, whose economic vulnerability during medical and other crises usually led them to illegal fishing. With the help of savings clubs, they are more financially stable. It also helps get the children involved in the community.

The second, fish processing, is a value

addition that has great potential to transform the fishers’ lives. Armed with knowledge of fish processing and drying techniques and links to fair trade companies that market premium seafood, fishers can eliminate middlemen and create better value for their catch.

One such social enterprise is Fishers and Changemakers, Inc. (FCI), which makes and markets seafood products that are created using sustainable technologies and equitable business practices. Their partnership with RARE is in six municipalities, with a target of about 40 kilos of assorted dried seafood per month.

Dhang Tecson is co-founder and chief marketing “mermaid” of FCI says that their partnership with RARE appeared at the right time, and having them as their technical team made it easier to understand the sustainability part of the equation. It also ensured that the catch followed sustainable practices, and it helped scale up operations, dovetailing RARE’s expansion.

Tecson shares experiences of fishers being changed after their experience with FCI. “When they saw the final products, they forgot about the money but valued the sense of pride and dignity gained from producing the high-quality product,” she says.

Where’s My Mascot?

While the most visible facet of RARE’s work has been the Pride campaign, featuring the (often) dancing local species as a mascot, Arquiza says that is usually one of the last pieces of the puzzle. “They (mascots) serve as a constant visual reminder to the community of what it is they are trying to save,” she says.

People are likely to encounter the mascots in posters and billboards in the municipal building, in the fish market, and during festivals on floats. “The community is proud of their mascots. For many fishers, it’s also a constant reminder of their achievements in protecting their coastal areas,” says Arquiza.

The mascots are indeed one of RARE’s salient features. RARE’s roots lie in the social marketing that helped RARE founder David Hill save the St. Lucia parrot from extinction. Hill’s 1979 campaign rendered the parrot ubiquitous—it was everywhere from billboards to stamps, from souvenirs to newspapers. The penalty for killing the bird was increased, and soon, the



“ The community is proud of their mascots. For many fishers, it’s also a constant reminder of their achievements in protecting their coastal areas.”

Yasmin Arquiza
RARE

community started taking pride in the parrot as one of their own.

RARE’s strategy has always been to work on building solutions with the community and bringing the government in as an essential part of the process, before scaling up.

What’s the Catch?

RARE’s efforts have been largely positive, but not without speed-breakers.

Since the initiative is heavily dependent on the local administration, helmed by an elected official, a change in the mayor sometimes means that the new mayor needs to be convinced of the efficacy and need of the program.

FCI has also hit a

few roadblocks during the projects: consistent supply of fish, logistics and transportation, and expensive FDA norms has pushed the project to a corner. However, the teams are working on the supply issue with a seafood calendar for each town, which can better predict the type and amount of catch that FCI can expect. Other species, such as flying fish, are also to be introduced to the market.

The ideal situation, perhaps is one that Belize, a Central American country, has adopted. Aspects of the Fish Forever program, including managed access and Pride campaigns, have been adopted by the country’s Fisheries Department as a

nationwide policy.

However, Belize’s fishing population of nearly 15,000 fishers is a far cry from Philippines’ 1.4 million small-scale fishers. The signs, however, are positive. The most recent Philippine Development Plan emphasizes sustainable fishing and the amended Fisheries Code has increased penalties for illegal fishing.

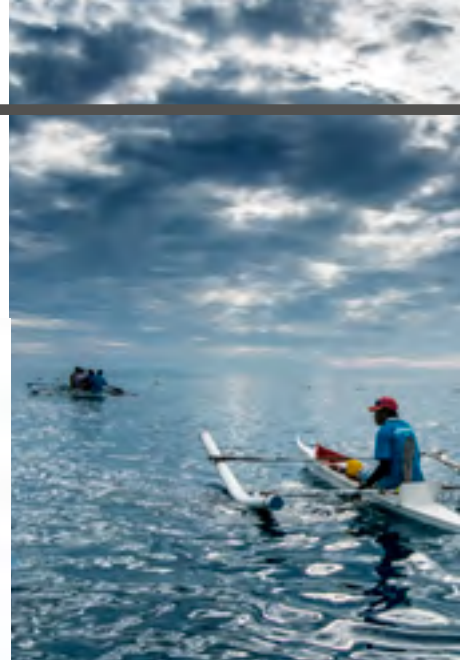
“It’s a long-drawn process,” says Arquiza. “We are hoping that peer-to-peer interactions between mayors will help us reach more local government units so that we can build a critical mass of partners and gear up for nationwide adoption.” 

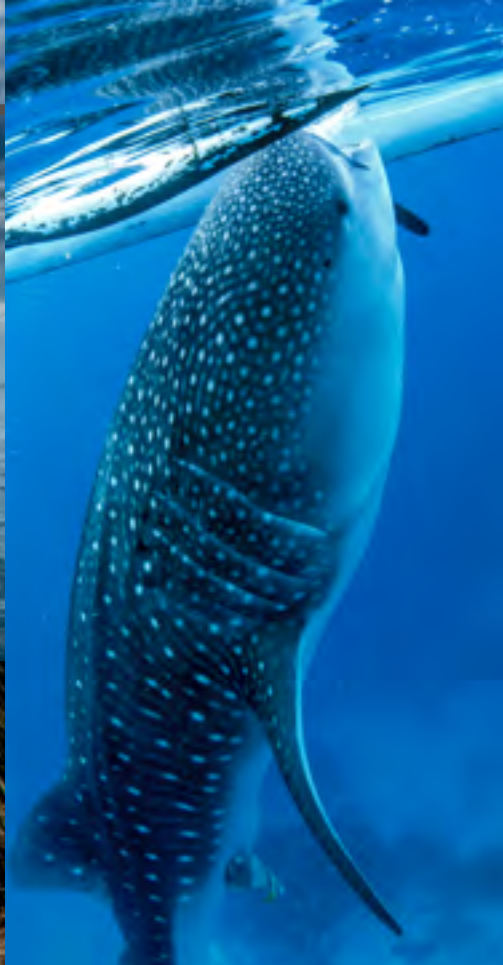
Swimming with the Whale Sharks in Oslob

Photos by Tanawat Likitkererat, Ph.D.



Oslob is a small municipality in the southern tip of Cebu Island, Philippines. It comprises 21 barangays (villages). In 2011, buoyed by a similar project in Donsol, a village about 600 kilometres north, Oslob began offering whale shark feeding and sighting tours. Its proximity to a natural waterfall, and guaranteed whale shark sighting meant that tourists flocked to Oslob.






Tanawat has a Ph.D. in International Development from Tulane University. His expertise is in applications of spatial statistics in public health. Beyond academia, he is an award-winning photographer. His photography has been featured in magazines such as National Geographic (Thai Edition), and Popular Photography Magazine USA. He currently works with USAID Wildlife Asia Project to prevent illegal wildlife trade and trafficking.

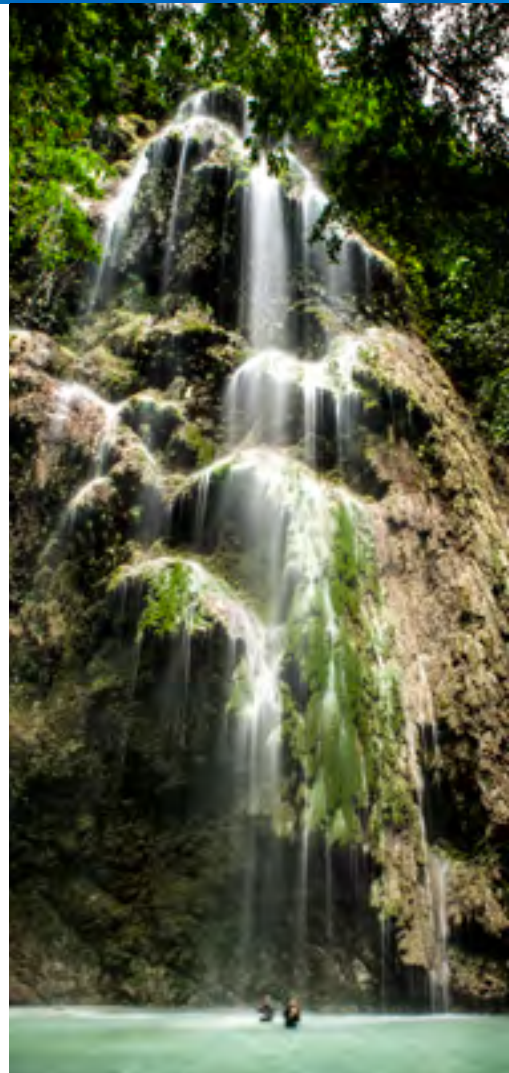


There is a vital difference in the experience, however: while the Donsol project, born in 1998 after the Government of Philippines outlawed the killing of whale sharks, maintains the animals in their natural habitat, the Oslob project attracts the whale sharks by feeding them.


Environmentalists have long protested the tourism in Oslob for various reasons: the whale sharks, traditionally migratory creatures who live in deep waters, are now seen in Oslob for most of the year, in shallow waters. The food they are fed are not nutritionally sound, and to make matters worse, the whale sharks are known to suffer from cuts from propellers and abrasions from contact with the boat.

A 2015 report by Large Marine Vertebrates Project Philippines (LAMAVE) found that this practice may have unforeseen negative consequence for the entire marine ecosystem.

However, tour guides and residents of Oslob argue that this keeps the whale shark from hunting. Tourism is now the area's largest contributor to the economy, and locals are loathe to adopt any practice that stops the tourists from visiting. 



TALE OF ONE CITY: Surat and Its Quest for Resilience



A view of Surat by night
Photo Credit: Rahul Bhadane, Wikipedia

With the focus on sustainability training on corporates, multi-nodal civic authorities are also examining strategies to make their cities more sustainable. Surat, a city in India, has emerged from the shadows of its past to make giant strides in resilience, as part of the 100 Resilient Cities Network. Meera Rajagopalan talks to **Kamlesh Yagnik**, Chief Resilience Officer, Surat.



On paper, Surat seems a city that should not be trying so hard.

To other cities it must seem like that topper in high school who is desperate to change his single bad grade.

After all, it is one of the first cities in the country to join the Asian Cities Climate Change Resilience Network (ACCCRN), it was also the first city in the country to have a city-level group exclusively dealing with climate change, Surat Climate Change Trust, and the first Indian city to join the 100 Resilient Cities network, floated by the Rockefeller Foundation.

What's more, it is not particularly low in human indexes. It grew in population by 65% in the first decade of the century, and was reported to have the highest annual family income among cities in the country, in a 2008 study.

Surat is where the world goes to polish its rough diamonds. It is estimated that nine out of ten diamonds in the world have been polished

by Surat. About 40% of the synthetic textiles in India are from Surat.

So it seems counter-intuitive that Surat would be so worried about its future. However, Kamlesh Yagnik, Surat's Chief Resilience Officer (CRO), thinks that's one of the reasons Surat might not be so resilient: the dependence of the city on two businesses.

"What will happen if tomorrow, Africa changes its policy?" he says, referring to the diamond polishing business, adding that economic resilience is one of the factors he makes sure he addresses as the city's CRO, even if it does not directly relate to environmental concerns.

Yagnik is the person entrusted with the task of leading the city toward resilience, as part of the city's engagement with the Rockefeller Foundation. A graduate of Indian Institutes of Technology, Mumbai, with a specialization in energy management, and the former president of the Southern Gujarat

Chamber of Commerce, Yagnik is a pick for the post for his expertise the city's civic and commercial topography. It's also the reason economic resilience is even being considered by the city which, in normal circumstances, would take pride in its unique economic status.

According to the 100RC website, "100 Resilient Cities, or 100RC, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping cities around the world build resilience to the economic, social and physical challenges that are increasingly part of the 21st century. While many of the climate change, sustainability and disaster risk reduction strategies may focus on adapting to the shocks, resilience works toward a proactive plan to minimize the possibility of the shock, so that cities can ensure and thrive, even in an imbalanced world."

The other cities in India that are part of the cohort include Jaipur, Bengaluru and Chennai.

Being one among a hundred: The 100RCs

The 100 Resilient Cities is not just a group of cities, says Yagnik, it is a network where each city's best practices are put forward to the network, and collective solutions sought.

Becoming part of the network requires an application process, and cities were chosen on several parameters including the nature of the challenges, probable impact of the initiatives, and the leadership of the city.

The network also gives cities access to over 125 solution providers, who work with the city on a pro bono or minimal cost basis, so the city can strengthen its policy framework and solutions. The 100RCs network also provides access to funds for select projects.

However, the value that the group provides is far more than the sum of these, says Yagnik.

“Everyone wants collective good, and everyone wants to participate. Platforms to engage with the process are not readily available,” he says. The 100RCs initiative is such a platform, he says, adding that such initiatives and platforms need to be replicated so that knowledge and experiences can be shared.

Surat is a city spread over 325 square kilometres. It is fed by the river Tapi, and is prone to flooding. To compare, Mumbai is

spread over 603 square kilometres, and New York, over 1,200 square kilometres. Some of Surat's identified challenges were in the areas of flooding, vector-borne diseases, and improving nutrition, water management and the electric grid.

For Yagnik, it was interesting to note that other cities were dealing with similar issues, and that solutions were at hand. Rotterdam, for instance, whose resilience challenges include flooding, cyber attacks, migrants and economic inequality, has proven itself a leader in water management. It is now helping Surat draw up its master plan in water management.

Similarly, the city that is closest to Surat in terms of the nature of challenges is Bangkok, which is also facing challenges in traffic management, housing and economy, and economic dependence on a few sectors of the economy.

Based on the Resilience Framework of the group, the country's first comprehensive resilience strategy was unveiled on April 17, 2017. The strategy lists twenty-one goals in seven major areas, and 65 initiatives to achieve the same (See Box for priorities).

Being a naturally flood-prone area, with over 25



2013 Floods
Photo Credit: Rukn950, Wikimedia Commons

“When disaster strikes, you are typically on your own. So it's good to build capacities from the top-down and bottom-up.”

notable floods over the past century, Surat experiences climate change (as most cities do), in its increasing intensity of rains—from 30-35 moderate spells to a dozen intense spells. The city was in dire need of a comprehensive system that did not involve reactions, but rather, a strategy that involved planning and operationalizing an end-to-end system for monitoring and action.

With expertise as part of the Surat Climate Change Trust, the city has now implemented an early

response system based on the Indian Meteorological Department's forecasts. An additional service also provides residents with SMS alerts of the dam's water levels. What's more, a volunteer-run Facebook group, “Surat Flood Information” provides accurate and educated meteorological information.

Other projects are underway, and each project corrals resources from across the board, making for a massive exercise in collaboration.



Emerging from the shadows of the plague

Perhaps Surat’s proactiveness in this area can be explained by its history: Surat has seen two major calamities: it was the reported epicentre of an outbreak of suspected plague in 1994, and the floods of 2006 which, like the 2015 flood in Chennai, was caused by massive amounts of water discharge from a dam. The city bounced back from the plague epidemic with great speed and alacrity; it was as if a personal assault was made on the citizens of the city. The then city commissioner, S.R. Rao, swung into action, creating a transparent programme

where municipal bodies were in touch with people’s problems day in and day out.

Rao’s tenure saw Surat emerge from the status of “plague city” to “clean city”, bagging the title of second cleanest city in the country in a national study by Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), two years after the plague.

What was a major disaster turned out to be a massive reawakening of pride in the city, and Yagnik says this has helped him in his quest to make Surat more resilient.

Communities maketh a city

While social cohesion is one of the goals of Surat’s resilience strategy, the city seems to have made giant strides in that direction already. Yagnik emphasizes the fact that any strategy must take into confidence the people it serves.

Community participation is high in a city like Surat, whose pride took a massive hit. For instance, when the police commissioner of Surat proposed the Safe City Surat initiative that required the installation of 104 CCTV cameras across the city, the

citizens pitched in. The people of the city funded the project to the tune of \$10 million. And when the city showed far-from-flattering statistics in the sex ratio of the state, more than one million took a public pledge that they would not commit female foeticide.

This, says Yagnik, community participation, must be the fulcrum of any city-wide development strategy. In fact, that is one of the key takeaways from the city’s engagement with 100RCs, he says.

Surat’s priorities as a 100RC city

- 11 initiatives around Connectivity and Mobility
- 7 initiatives around Affordable Housing
- 13 initiatives around Water Availability and Quality
- 5 initiatives around Employment and Economic Dependency
- 14 initiatives around Environment and Ecosystems
- 10 initiatives around Social Cohesion
- 3 initiatives around Public Health

Everyone wants collective good, and everyone wants to participate. Platforms to engage with the process are not readily available.”



Kamlesh Yagnik

“When disaster strikes, you are typically on your own,” he says. “So it’s good to build capacities from the top-down and bottom-up.” If we build capacities at the community and NGO level, the dependence on authority is decreased, he says.

The path ahead for Surat is guided by the resilience strategy. However, Yagnik says, that is not a set path; rather, it is a guiding document that can and will be refined as the city travels along the path to resilience. **i**

Where's the Beef?

Voices on bovine methane emissions



Photo Credit: Annie Spratt, Unsplash

There has been a lot of talk about cow belches and how they may be more harmful to the Earth than we had earlier assumed. Recent revised calculations of methane produced per head of cattle show that global livestock emissions in 2011 were 11% higher than estimates based on data from the UN's Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC). This has, predictably, resulted in varied opinions from all sectors.

While a section of researchers suggested that the feed may be the culprit, and suggested a return to grass-fed cows, a report by an international group of researchers led by the Food Climate Research Network (FCRN), based at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom, says that is not the case.

Amidst this, corporations, not to be left out, have come up with various products to help reduce the carbon footprint of current beef

production: from plant-based meat substitutes (the Impossible Burger comes to mind) to Mootral, a probiotic that claims to reduce the methane in cow burps to help tackle this.

Let's cut through the noise and look at the issue from various perspectives, some traditional, some not.

DR. MARCO SPRINGMANN

Senior researcher on Environmental Sustainability and Public Health, Oxford Martin Programme on the Future of Food
Change to plant-based diet inevitable, must involve deliberate policy changes

Dr. Springmann is the author of a 2016 research, "Analysis and valuation of the health and climate change cobenefits of dietary change" which concludes that a shift to plant-based diets that rely less on meat has not just environmental benefits, but could also save as many as eight million lives. He says that

current meat consumption levels are unsustainable and that a shift toward a plant-based diet must be a deliberate push from policymakers.

A switch towards more plant-based diets would be a very gradual process that would give farmers, consumers, and retailers plenty of time

to adjust. What is clear is that current levels of meat consumption are neither healthy nor sustainable, even in many low-income countries. A shift towards a greater reliance on plant-based food sources would be better for the environment and offer the opportunity to improve the healthiness of diets. It will be a challenge in particular for policymakers to encourage and manage shifts towards sustainable and healthy food systems by passing carefully considered health, environmental and agricultural policies.

The plate of 2050 will look different in different places. What sustainable diets would have in common is that they would mainly rely on plant foods, with a mix of whole grains, legumes,

nuts and seeds, and plenty of fruits and vegetables. What specific foods are chosen within those categories (rice vs wheat, or beans vs tofu) depends on local preferences, price and supply, which in turn depends on growing conditions and trade connections. If globalisation continues at pace, then one would expect an ever-greater mix of diets than already found today. Plant-based diets are already becoming aspirational diets in many parts of the Western world. In order not to fuel social divides, it will be important to create affordable and nutritionally balanced plant-based diets for different tastes, regions and socio-economic groups.

“A shift towards a greater reliance on plant-based food sources would be better for the environment and offer the opportunity to improve the healthiness of diets.”

Dr. Marco Springmann

MARG WILL

CEO, Organic Systems & Solutions

We have to be mindful of our choices and strive to be better

Australia-based Marg Will has helped many farms go organic and has seen first-hand an increase in awareness about the origin of food in the country. She cites research and practices that has helped curb emissions in the Australian beef industry, and says that could be a model for the rest of the world.

There have been significant developments over the past five years in Australia to tackle the issue of methane from cattle. This issue and the broader issue of environmental damage and emissions are well and truly being researched and alternatives implemented in Australia. The Australian beef industry has just completed a sustainability road map to ensuring continuing better environmental practices are being implemented.

CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation) found that when introducing seaweed into the feed of cattle - instead of becoming methane, carbon in the gut becomes available for producing other types of energy molecules more useful to cattle for their growth. It can almost eliminate methane emissions from the digestive processes of beef cattle. Great news for reducing methane and also

reducing the amount of livestock feed required to produce beef!

The desire by consumers for more environmentally-conscious and welfare-friendly production methods has seen significant growth in organic beef production in Australia. By converting to organic beef production, producers are not only reducing emissions (and increasing biodiversity and carbon sequestration) but actively regenerating their local communities through the increased profits.

Any diet changes based on research and considerations is a good thing. Just make sure that

“Any diet changes based on research and considerations is a good thing. Just make sure that all issues are taken into consideration before making food choices.”

Marg Will

all issues are taken into consideration before making food choices: for example, deforestation for cropping, pesticide and herbicide leaching, impacts on biodiversity, and food miles.

Grass-fed cows: Most beef produced in Australia is from grass-fed production systems. Internationally, the research from the Savory Institute demonstrates how grazing can be used to regenerate soils. This practice is having great success with land management.

Interventions (probiotic or medicinal) to reduce methane emissions in cows: Already in use in Australia, and real benefits to implementing in other countries.

Veganism is a proposed solution. I think it's wonderful that people are actively researching their food choices and making decisions accordingly. Does consuming highly processed white bread that uses a large amount of power to mill the grain then bake and package, create more emissions than a free-range chicken? We need to examine how what we eat is produced, the animal welfare considerations, the food miles undertaken and where these all sit with our core beliefs.

The plate of a human in 2050 will depend on the long-term effects health-wise on emerging technologies such as lab-created meats, plant-based substitutes and GMO technologies.

GEORGE JACOBS

President, Vegetarian Society (Singapore)

Remove the problem from its root

Jacobs advocates a complete cut in meat of all kinds, citing humane reasons as the primary focus, buttressing his argument with facts on the unsustainability of current diets, and debunking myths about the taste, availability and health perspectives of a non-meat diet.

As the effects of climate change become more inescapably apparent, more and more people want to know what they can do to help. However, well-intentioned, well-informed people may disagree on how to help.


The best solution may lie in macro solutions, rather than micro solutions. For example, when people debated the use of plastic bags, people debated whether to ask for plastic or paper bags at the store. People now realise that was the wrong question. Instead, we now bring our own bags,

and do not take any bags from the store. Similarly, maybe we should just not eat cows at all and let their calves be the only ones who drink their milk.

From a big picture view, animal based foods, regardless of how we tweak their production, constitute an inefficient food source, because many kilograms of food must be fed to the animals, including farm-raised marine animals, to produce one kilogram of food. Not surprisingly, Drawdown, a book by Paul Hawken which evaluates 100 climate change solutions, found plant-rich diets to be the 4th most powerful action we can take.

Three of the prominent objections to switching from an animal based diet to a plant rich diet stem from the healthfulness, taste, and convenience of plant based foods. Fortunately, progress has been made in

addressing all three of these objections to eating greener. Firstly, health researchers increasingly include plant-based, also known as vegan, diets as a variable in their studies, and results suggest that plant-based diets are sufficient, and even beneficial, for health, as is explained in the 2016 paper titled "Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Vegetarian Diets"

As to taste, eateries continue to develop a wide range of plant-based foods to fit virtually every culture and palate. Mock meat and lab-produced meat might become reality soon, rendering the argument of taste void. Along similar lines, to address the third objection to starting the shift to plant-based foods, (i.e. convenience and availability-Ed.) going plant-based is becoming less and less of a challenge. 

“Three of the prominent objections to switching from an animal based diet to a plant rich diet stem from the healthfulness, taste, and convenience of plant based foods. Fortunately, progress has been made in addressing all three of these objections to eating greener.”

George Jacobs



Volunteering in the Age of Gigs

By Matthew Boyd

Photo Credit: Vollie

I have worked in the NGO space for the best part of a decade, and it has transformed my perspective on life.

You meet the most inspiring people on a daily basis, and I truly care about this sector and where it's headed. This is why the future of volunteering is an issue close to my heart. In any industry, it is vital to plan for longer periods—3,5,10 years from now. So what does the future of volunteering hold? It is my opinion that the gig economy will play a key role in this future.

For those unfamiliar with the term, the gig economy refers to the growing number of workers abandoning their traditional 9-5 employment in favour of gigs—working independently on a task-by-task basis. So the question I pose to you with this article is what if we considered

“gig” volunteering? The trend toward a “gig” economy has well and truly begun, but is the NGO sector prepared?

The way we consume entertainment through Netflix rather than simply turning on the TV, how we now book taxis with Uber, even the way we choose accommodation for our next holiday through AirBnB, are all symptoms of the way new age technologies are transforming the way we live and act. In this digital age, the workforce is increasingly mobile and so are jobs. Modern-day professionals are able than ever before to select temporary jobs, while organisations can select the best individuals from a larger pool.

What this means for the social sector

Digitisation and the entrance of the millennial generation into the workforce is fuelling this change toward a gig economy. It is vital that NGOs effectively connect with millennial skill sets to support their organisations' work.

Taking a closer look at the gig economy, here are some quick facts:

- It is expected that by 2020, **40% of US workforce** will, at least partly, be involved in this method of work.
- Freelance work has been common for a while in writing, consulting, design, but is now moving more broadly into **other professions**.
- Unemployment is driving demand for this method of work to **“fill the gaps”** with their wages.

Whatever the motivation for this shift, it is indisputable that this mode of work is rapidly growing alongside the emergence of digital freelance marketplaces. Data from the Future of Work Research Monitor from Airtasker revealed 4.1 million Australians had freelanced between 2014-15.

Where is the increasing demand coming from?

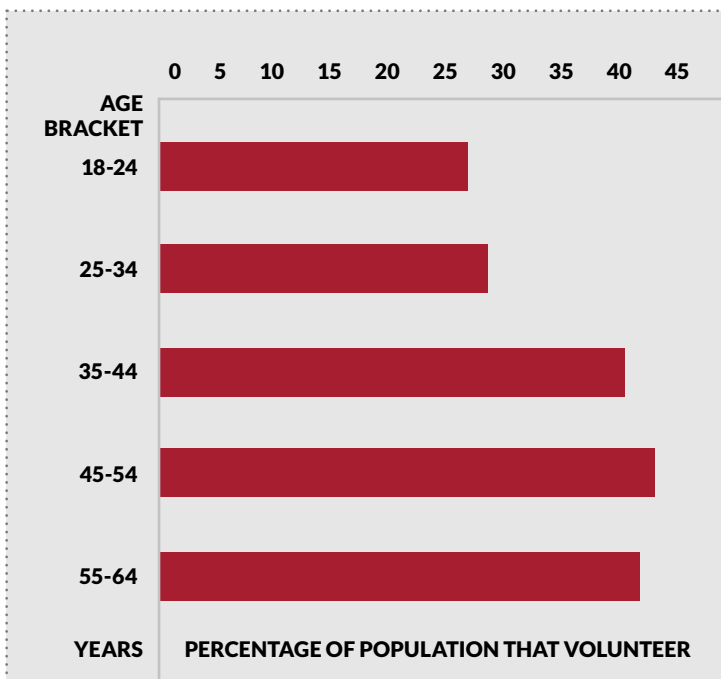
Starting with young people (18-39 years old), the increasing demand is driven by a desire for autonomous and flexible work. It also reflects a generational shift towards freedom and entrepreneurship. Although people over the age of 40 also have a desire for this change and want to set their own schedules and choose their tasks and work in an environment that suits them.

A study by recruitment firm Hays revealed that 55% of Australians would take a 20% salary cut to work from home. A further 22% would sacrifice 10% of annual income in return for flexible working arrangements. Airtasker's

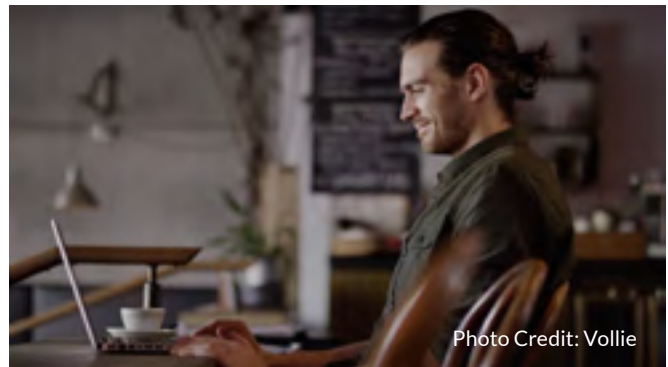
2015 survey of the future of work revealed that 85% of Australians believe that the traditional 9 to 5 office hours are inflexible.

Let's apply this working trend to a major issue facing NGOs: connecting with the next generation of volunteers (Millennials, and even Gen Z). The current volunteer rate among working is lowest among millennials, at about 30%. Volunteering Australia has highlighted a need to engage the next generation of volunteers more successfully and utilise technology to do so, but the next generation of Australians aren't volunteering as much (as shown in the graph).

Volunteering Rates Across Different Generations



Source: Volunteering Australia, State of Volunteering Report 2016




So why are young people not volunteering as much?

Through developing my business, Vollie, some key points have emerged. First, there is a lack of flexibility in current volunteering programs. The mandatory requirement of committing to X number of days each month is a major deterrent to young volunteers. This kind of fixed commitment puts people off in the initial stages of engagement itself. For example, with certain NGO requirements, it isn't necessary that the volunteer work on a fixed schedule and place; it could be that the volunteer can work on remotely around their own schedule – this is the benefit of online volunteering.

Second, considering people today generally have less time to volunteer, it is vital that they clearly understand the scope of work. Third, and perhaps most importantly, modern-day professionals don't know where to start a lot of the time when it comes to finding a volunteering opportunity. They can be overwhelmed by all the available options.

The social sector could leverage the power of young millennials by providing them with volunteering options that are easy to find and perform.

Here's the bottom line: Millennials and modern-day professionals still want to change the world, but they want to do it in a way that affirms their sense of purpose. There is a huge opportunity for all of us to be conduits of change by making more connections between our society and the animals, plants, and people in this world. To achieve this, volunteering must evolve, and technology will be the greatest enabler of this. 



Matthew Boyd is the Founder and Managing Director of Vollie, a platform that connects skilled Australians with non-profit organisations using a new style of skills-based remote volunteering.

Book Worm: A list of must-read books on sustainability

The 2010s saw a sudden influx of books on the theme of sustainability, reflective of its surging relevance in the world. However, a call to sustainable living was not new, and many books have explored it in detail, examining its various facets.

We present a list of five books that are a must-read on the theme. They are arranged in chronological order of first publication. *(Book descriptions from publishers)*



The Greening of Asia: The Business Case for Solving Asia's Environmental Emergency (2015)

By Mark L. Clifford

In this book, Hong Kong-based author Mark L. Clifford provides a behind-the-scenes look at what companies in China, India, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Thailand are doing to build businesses that will lessen the environmental impact of Asia's extraordinary economic growth.

From solar and wind power technologies to green buildings, electric cars, water services, and sustainable tropical forestry, Asian corporations are upending old business models in their home countries and throughout the world. Clifford paints detailed profiles of what some of these companies are doing and includes a unique appendix that encapsulates the environmental business practices of more than fifty companies mentioned in the book.

Series: Columbia Business School Publishing
Hardcover: 320 pages
Publisher: Columbia University Press



The Age of Sustainable Development (2015)

By Jeffrey D. Sachs

In this book, with a foreword by former UN Secretary General Ban ki-Moon, Jeffrey D. Sachs, a thought leader in sustainable development, presents a compelling and practical framework for how global citizens can use a holistic way forward to address the seemingly intractable worldwide problems of persistent extreme poverty, environmental degradation, and political-economic injustice: sustainable development.

Sachs offers readers, students, activists, environmentalists, and policy makers the tools, metrics, and practical pathways they need to achieve Sustainable Development Goals. Far more than a rhetorical exercise, this book is designed to inform, inspire, and spur action.

Paperback: 352 pages
Publisher: Harper Perennial;
 Reprint edition (October 19, 2010)



Small Is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered

By E.F. Schumacher

(First published 1973)

Hailed as an "eco-bible" by Time magazine, "Small is Beautiful", E.F. Schumacher's riveting, richly researched statement on sustainability has become more relevant and vital with each year since its initial groundbreaking publication during the 1973 energy crisis. A landmark statement against "bigger is better" industrialism, the book paved the way for twenty-first century books on environmentalism and economics.

Paperback: 352 pages
Publisher: Harper Perennial;
 Reprint edition (Oct. 19, 2010)



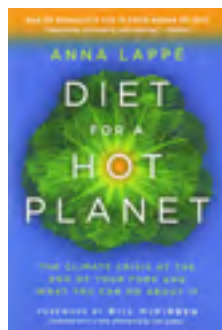
Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things (2002)

By Michael Braungart and William McDonough

"Reduce, reuse, recycle" urge environmentalists; in other words, do more with less in

order to minimize damage. But in this provocative book, authors William McDonough and Michael Braungart argue that this approach perpetuates a one-way, "cradle to grave" manufacturing model that dates to the Industrial Revolution and casts off as much as 90 percent of the materials it uses as waste, much of it toxic. Why not challenge the notion that human industry must inevitably damage the natural world? Elaborating their principles from experience (re)designing everything from carpeting to corporate campuses, they make an exciting and viable case for change.

Paperback: 193 pages
Publisher: North Point Press



Diet for a Hot Planet: The Climate Crisis at the End of Your Fork and What You Can Do about It (2010)

By Anna Lappé

Nearly four decades after her mother, Frances Moore Lappé, published "Diet for a Small

Planet", sparking a revolution in our thinking about the social and environmental impact of our food choices, Anna Lappé picks up the conversation, examining another hidden cost of our food system: the climate crisis. From raising cattle in industrial-scale feedlots to razing rainforests to make palm oil for Pop-Tarts, the choices we make about how we put food on our plates, and what we do with the waste, contribute to as much as one third of total greenhouse-gas emissions. Lappé exposes the interests resisting this crucial conversation while she educates and empowers readers and eaters committed to healing the planet.

Paperback: 352 pages
Publisher: Bloomsbury USA;
 Reprint edition (April 4, 2011)

Peddalling hard, going nowhere

By Bharati Ramachandran

“We want to make a start in fundraising. We don’t have a budget for communication.”

If I had a dollar for every time I’ve heard both these phrases in the same conversation, I’d be able to underwrite a non-profit’s annual communications budget.

Fundraising in most non-profits is considered an activity that brings in income, whereas communication is treated as an expense. Even non-profits that have fully functional fundraising teams often invest in “donor acquisition” but seldom in “donor retention.”

This means that when non-profits invest only in donor acquisition, and not enough in communication to retain donors, non-profits are spending more money every year replacing donors who just left. Or, raising funds to replace the money they would otherwise lose.

These donors don’t leave because they had strong motives to do so, like a disagreement with the organisation’s mission or use of funds. They leave because no one’s listening.

It’s important for non-profits to pay attention to donor retention. In other words, in cohesive and effective communication. It’s also imperative to make a

conscious choice and go all the way.

What does it mean to go “all the way”?

Most not-for-profits that I meet these days have a barebones website, often with a payment gateway. But putting up a stand-alone website – even with a payment gateway – does not equal having an online fundraising strategy.

A simple online fundraising strategy could be in place with three basic tools: a website, a social media channel like Facebook, and an email newsletter. Together, these three can form a digital pipeline that helps a non-



Bharati Ramachandran runs Barapani, a communications, campaign and fundraising agency that works with not-for-profit organisations. She helps organisations tell powerful stories, change behaviour and policy, and raise funds.

Consider these statistics from the Fundraising Effectiveness Survey (2013) conducted by the Association of Fundraising Professionals and the Urban Institute in the US.

- A gain of every **100 donors in a year** is offset by the **loss of 105 donors** who just stopped giving.
- For every **\$100 raised**, not-for-profits **lose \$96** because of a drop in other donations.

“**Fundraising in most non-profits is considered an activity that brings in income, whereas communication is treated as an expense.**

Even non-profits that have fully functional fundraising teams often invest in “donor acquisition” but seldom in “donor retention.””

profit both acquire and retain donors.

How does this work?

Let's assume a non-profit has a well-written, professional website in place. What does this mean? This means engaging content that is tailored to the visitor, including a powerful case for support. Just having the brochure content online will not work in most cases.

Also, it is naive to assume that visitors will visit the website often.

Once a visitor is on the website, it is best to capture contact details, by leading them to social media channels, or have them subscribe to the organization's newsletter.

Now for the connections: The Facebook page needs to work in an integrated manner with the website, highlighting the

current campaigns on the website, directing traffic to the website's corresponding landing pages, giving users a qualitative experience of the work and its impact on the ground through stories of change, and most important, recreating the flavour of the organisation with a distinctive voice, language and tone that is uniquely its own! Most Facebook pages are impersonal and do not have a unique voice. They also largely post links, and very little original content.


Facebook, however, is increasingly making it difficult for an organisation's feed to show up on a follower's timeline. To reinforce, what is needed is something that takes the message right to the donor's email inbox – hence, an email newsletter!

Again, most organisations I work with send out event-based,

report-based newsletters that are seldom read. A donor-friendly e-newsletter is short, has a strong story of change, some quantitative achievements, a thank you and an appeal!

Together, the website, the Facebook page and the e-newsletter work to consistently engage the visitor, until the visitor becomes a first-time donor, a repeat donor, and if the case is really compelling, an evangelist for the non-profit.

Without doing all of this, just having a website is like entering a cycling race with a stationary exercise cycle.

There's good news here, though. Any non-profit organization that takes communication seriously, and is willing to go the distance, will see an increase in its fundraising ROI, and a decrease in its donor acquisition costs over the long term. 

seamless

PAYMENTS • E-COMMERCE • RETAIL

■ THAILAND 2018

Seamless Thailand conference to address essential trends transforming payments, retail and e-commerce industries in Thailand.

Photo Credit: Terrapinn

With a US\$2.9 billion e-commerce market expected to grow at an annual rate of 15.9% through until at least 2021, a new national electronic payment system with 18 million users already and a recovering retail sector with 2.6% annual growth, Thailand is an exciting example of the future potential for commerce in Southeast Asia.

Seamless Thailand is an opportunity to meet with some of the breakout e-commerce, retail, payments and logistics businesses who have transformed commerce throughout the country, as well as some of the established players who have had to innovate to survive.

Seamless Thailand will bring together key experts, innovators and entrepreneurs to dive deep into how the payments, retail and e-commerce industries are going through rapid transformation over three tracks of content. The conference will feature over 60 financial, retail and e-commerce thought leaders

from global institutions like Facebook, Big C, Siam Commercial Bank, IndoSuisse, The Bank of Thailand, Ascend Group, Pomelo, Krungsri Bank, Eatigo, Priceza, TMB Bank, The ETDA, Thai Fintech Association, the National Innovation Agency and more who will be taking the stage to exchange ideas and share best practices.

Some of the payments discussion will centre around the following:


- How machine learning transforms the banking industry
- Are mobile wallets reaching a tipping point?
- Why cash is still king: Factors limiting the growth of e-payments in Thailand
- How a cashless society opens the door to lasting financial inclusion
- The fintech driven transformation of the digital payment ecosystem
- APIs and the future of fintech/financial institution in the payments sector

In the retail and e-commerce space, the discussions will be around:

- Creating seamless customer experiences in an omnichannel world
- Urbanisation: The key reason for the growth in convenience formats
- Are pop up shops the future of retail?
- Redefining the retail store in today's omnichannel economy
- Leveraging e-commerce to create new growth options
- Winning in retail in a mobile first Thailand
- The rise of local, on-demand food delivery
- Customer service: How can retailers continue to compete in the age of e-commerce
- Inflection point: Scaling e-commerce in Thailand
- How to enrich merchandising attributes and re-imagine stores as consumer magnets
- Chat apps and the rise of social commerce
- The critical role of the

luxury market in the future of retail

- A guide to overcoming the challenges of cultural nuances when expanding into local markets
- Evaluating 3PL strategies to reduce lead times, improve reliability and enhance visibility
- The effect of e-commerce on the future of logistics
- Retail distributors in Thailand: Redefining the business model

The event also showcases an exhibition featuring the latest products and services offered by leading players in this space. Key sponsors at this event include BPC Banking Technologies, Discover Financial Services, Akamai, Emarsys, Infobip & VeritasPay as well as exhibitors. 

EVENT DETAILS

Seamless Thailand
5-6 Feb 2018
Centara Grand & Bangkok
Convention Centre at
CentralWorld, Bangkok

Eight Secrets to a Sustainable Workplace

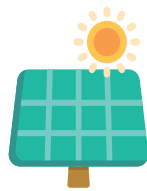
People spend most of their waking hours in their workplaces. As we continue to strive to be more productive and better at communication, we tend to forget, or not put in place, sustainable practices.

While the usual suspects—for instance, minimize use of paper and switch off lights when not in use—may have run their course, there are other ways you can work toward becoming more sustainable.



1. Commute on a Greener Path

Ideas: Encourage employees to walk, bike, use the public transport system, or carpool.
Other benefits: It's healthy, and can act as exercise as well. Carpooling helps improve social interactions.



5. Renew Your Commitment

Ideas: Use solar energy. Even if the building is rented, consider talking to the landlord about going solar.
Other benefits: If able to produce extra and supply to the grid, could mean some income as well.



2. Say No to Detrimental Daily Drivers

Idea: Use energy-efficient equipment and machines--think cooling systems, refrigerators, printers.
Other benefits: They save on energy bills in the long run.



6. Save the Environment in an Entertaining Way

Idea: Create teams and challenges around going green—for green commute, practices in the office, less printing, etc.
Other benefits: Boosts employee engagement and promotes concern for the environment.



3. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Ideas: Apart from printing paper, consider reusing the back of business cards and other stationery. Save shipping boxes for reuse. If you buy newspapers, consider an online subscription instead. Always recycle your old newspapers.
Other benefits: Recycled newspaper can be monetized.



7. Check Your Connections

Idea: Check your vendors and ensure you are affiliated with good and credible suppliers and partners who are also environmentally conscious
Other benefits: It creates a sustainable business ecosystem.




4. See Green in Plants

Idea: Grow indoor plants
Other benefits: Indoor plants increase positivity. They also better air quality.



8. The Cup to Sustainability

Idea: Do away with paper and plastic cups. Provide staff with personalized cups to use for water and beverages.
Other benefits: Will increase pride in the organization, and also act as branding. 

Doing the Rounds: Circular Economy Need of the Hour

By Nicholas Eng, Laura Allen, and Abishek Balasubramanian.

Business and individuals alike are used to the linear model of “take, make, dispose”. This is illustrated by the enormous landfills we have, open dump sites and waste leakage into the ocean. Today humanity uses the equivalent of 1.6 Earths to provide the resources we use and absorb our waste. And this amount is expected to double by 2050, according to data from the United National Environment Programme.

In addition, when primary materials run out, they... run out. This poses price risks globally that we are already seeing the effects of. Price volatility for metals and agricultural output in the last decade was higher than any one decade in the 20th century. Waste generation rates in developing markets, particularly in Asia, are growing exponentially. Take Indonesia which currently generates a staggering 175,000 tonnes of material ‘waste’ every day (64 millions per year), according to data from the Indonesian Environment and Forestry Ministry. As incomes and consumption

grows, the number can only get higher, fast.

This outdated and inefficient linear model does not make economic sense for businesses – an estimated US\$ 2.5 trillion (about 80% of the total value) of the global consumer goods sector is lost annually. A switch to a circular economy can save companies over US\$1 trillion a year by 2025 if companies focus on supply chain, distribution and brand communications that increase recycling, reusing and remanufacturing.

Going Circular

Instead of “take, make, dispose”, the Circular Economy aims to keep materials in use for as long as possible. For example, in the case of a phone, we should prolong its use, reuse it, refurbish or repair it and finally, recycle it, to extract raw materials for further manufacturing. The objective is to stop the material from entering the ecosystem (i.e. keep the materials out of landfill, dumps, or oceans) and instead keep it in circulation.

E-Waste: The Silent Culprit



Photo Credit: Gone Adventurin

While plastics are an obvious candidate for the circular economy and efforts are being made to address the issue, one class of products has not received as much attention as necessary: e-waste.

Every year 27 million tonnes of electronic products are put on the market in Asia (nearly half the global amount!), and this number is growing by 29% each year. And while OECD countries have increasingly legislated for the proper collection and treatment of e-waste, most Asian countries are only

now waking up the scale of the challenge. Add to this illegal transboundary movements of e-waste and we get “dumping grounds” due to waste from developed countries being shipped to developing countries for illegal and unsafe “backyard recycling”. Given that Asia is almost half of all electronic sales, it’s not surprising that Asia now generates the highest proportion of e-waste in the world.

This is particularly baffling, since most of the materials required to manufacture electronic



gadgets are rare-earth metals which are in short supply and will soon run out.

Luckily, new legislations are being enacted to ensure collection and proper resource recovery, and companies that manufacture these goods are starting to create take-back programs where consumers can return the waste.

The Beginning of Change

Businesses are starting to realise the value in a circular economy where products are designed with the end in mind. Where they can be sorted, processed, converted

to raw materials and reused for manufacturing. Rethinking supply chain practices and making recycling more accessible to consumers are two prongs of this approach.

In Taiwan, used coffee grounds collected from Starbucks cafes are made into T-shirts, socks and soaps. Levi Strauss has also done the same, through in-store collection of old clothes and shoes from any brand, they get a steady supply of raw material that can then be transformed for other uses like insulation for buildings and even cushioning material.


In a collaboration with OpenIDEO, Coca-Cola crowdsourced ideas in 2014 on how recycling rates can be increased at home. From this came “How do I recycle this?” in 2015: an application where consumers can scan a product’s barcode and input their postcode to get up-to-date information on how to recycle an item.

And with the increasing trends of open innovation and collaboration, businesses are also tapping on startups to find solutions to drive the circular economy.

“The environmental and economic case for moving from a linear economy to a circular economy are not only practical, but are increasingly being demanded by consumers and governments around the world.”

“Looptworks” for example, repurposes leftover materials from premium goods manufacturers to make new products. Another example is LanzaTech that “uses a patented microbe technology to convert carbon-rich wastes and residues into fuel and chemical products”. They have also partnered with Boeing to produce low carbon jet fuel from ethanol derived from this process.

The environmental and economic case for moving from a linear economy to a circular economy are not only practical, but are increasingly being demanded by consumers and governments around the world. While old habits die hard, global trends

are driving businesses to rethink product design, supply chains, collection systems, consumer education, partnerships with governments and the waste management sector, etc. The solutions exist today. What is needed is the management will and the desire to bring about change on a large scale. 

Edited from an article by Nicholas Eng, Laura Allen, and Abishek Balasubramanian, Gone Adventurin team. Gone Adventurin enables companies to design circular business strategies, implement deployments to recycle post-consumer waste and create closed loop supply chains so that nothing goes to waste, and engage stakeholders through storytelling. Online at www.goneadventurin.com

For Goodness' Sake, Donate!

Giving festivals up their game

By Meera Rajagopalan



The first time I heard about #GivingTuesday, I was already suspicious. After all, it had a hashtag in front of it—how authentic could it be?

As a volunteer of India's Daan Utsav, a weeklong festival of giving, this seemed too sanitized. But a casual look at the figures told me all about the success the festival has had, in terms of donations. It follows the path my career, or running goals, should have, in an ideal situation: steep. Very steep.

From \$45.7 million donations in its inaugural year, #GivingTuesday has

reached over \$274 million in online donations in 2017, a record high, with donors from 150 countries. Apart from donations, people spent time volunteering, donated in kind, and performed other acts of kindness as well.

By no means is #GivingTuesday unique, though. In the United States, Minnesota's Give to the Max Day has been around since 2009. The homegrown holiday of giving raised a record \$20.6 million this year on the day, November 16.

Daan Utsav, celebrated from October 2-8 every year, was born as an idea to celebrate the spirit of giving

inherent in all of humanity. It has spread, albeit a bit unevenly, over the years. For example, there are pockets in the rural parts of the state of Odisha that celebrate the festival with great fervour, owing to the enthusiasm and galvanizing effect of one volunteer. Much like the country itself, Daan Utsav festivities are usually diverse, organic, chaotic, and full of heart. This also means, though, that it is tough to "track" the festival. In fact, official numbers as to the funds raised or giving activities organized are tough to come by.

Across the waters is Singapore's Giving Week,



which seems like a mix of online and offline charitable giving. It's a weeklong festival inspired by #GivingTuesday, but with more activities that people can be part of, rather than simply click-and-donate. The country was the first in Asia to organize #GivingTuesday in 2013. "It received such a great response that we thought it might be worthwhile to extend it into a week so that more Singaporeans and their families can take part," said Cherrisse Beh, assistant director of marketing communications at National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC), the organization that coordinates the festival.

This year, the festival has raised nearly SGD 1.3 million through the website. Around 180 organizations participated and 86 activities/opportunities for giving were conducted. It straddles the week between #GivingTuesday and International Volunteer

Day, and fittingly, the focus is both on donations and participation in events.

What happens?

#GivingTuesday is streamlined with online donation options made easily available. Local non-profits organize their own events to take advantage of the goodwill floating around and raise funds as well.


Daan Utsav is a bit of a mixed bag, as giving events include charity dinners, public place painting, villages coming together to celebrate, corporations engaging with non-profits through their employees and blood donations as well.

Singapore's Giving Week has a range of activities, apart from easy donation options on the website. Events offer an opportunity to give, or increase awareness for a cause or issue, says Beh. For instance, an adventure tours company also sensitized participants to the issue surrounding migrant workers.

What's the Point?

#GivingTuesday was founded to direct people to charitable giving after the consumerism of the Thanksgiving holiday. Daan Utsav's volunteer Aarti Madhusudan said the Indian festival is "an opportunity for everyone to celebrate inherent kindness and experience the joy that comes from giving."

Beh says that Singapore's Giving Week aims to "reach out to new givers, to help kick-start their giving journey by creating fun and simple opportunities to give." She also says that the festival will hopefully deepen the engagement of current givers, so that they can become galvanizers who encourage those around them to give back.

There are concerns about whether these special "festivals" simply redirect the giving that would have happened over the year. Regardless, it does feel good to see those numbers in green! 

How to Create a Festival

Timing is key: All festivals need to consider the time in which the festival is to be conducted. #GivingTuesday started as a counter to Thanksgiving consumerism, and also kicked off holiday giving.

Provide avenues for support/celebration: Just announcing a festival may not move people enough to do something. Make finding events to participate easy to find, as well as donating to causes.

Make connections easy: Rather than create large events, creating connections between givers and receivers will result in more meaningful and longer-lasting engagement.

Start small: People are getting creative in giving back, and use their skills to do good. In Singapore, a floral arrangement hobbyist who conducted flower arrangement classes, donated the resulting arrangements to the staff of a non-profit.

Take that first step: Once you get started, people will come forward to offer support and resources.

(with inputs from Cherrisse Beh)

SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING TRENDS: Thinking About the Box

While consumers demand sustainable packaging, there are several hurdles to be overcome by the corporations, finds **Ian Jamotillo**.



Photo Credit by Guus Baggemans, Unsplash

Sustainable packaging is making waves in the corporate scene; and it is offering a fresh take on what environmental compliance really means. However, a recent study revealed that the world isn't fully maximizing the benefits of sustainable packaging.

According to the 2017 Sustainable Packaging Study, conducted by Packaging Digest and Sustainable Packaging Coalition, "greenwashing" is still prevalent in the packaging

industry. The term is used to refer to unsupported or misleading claims about the environmental benefits of a product, service, and technology or even a company practice.

Lack of proper understanding, on the other hand, is still prevalent and many terms related to sustainability are still not understood in their entirety. A survey from the 2017 study where people are asked to rate each area of sustainable packaging

they find least understood confirmed that the term they considered least understood was "Circular Economy." Defined as a regenerative system where resources are kept in use for as long as possible and extracting its maximum value, circular economy serves as an alternative to a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose).

"Circular economy" got a rating of 3.98 followed by life-cycle analysis, a systematic inventory



Photo Credit: www.greenerpackage.com

technique used to assess environmental impacts associated with all the stages of a product's life with 3.4. (one being "best understood" and five being "in need of explanation"). Other areas of sustainable packaging that need proper education are responsible sourcing, carbon footprint, renewable materials and recycling.

When it comes to the most effective way of educating consumers about sustainable packaging, most respondents went the traditional way: on the packaging. The surprising result here was that only 5%

of brand managers felt that social media was the most effective way of educating people on the packaging's sustainability.

"The impact usually can't be measured or quantified in tangible business results, i.e. bottom line profits. However, being a successful influencer in a B2B industrial domain such as packaging affords you the ability to rally like-minded followers to act on your behalf," said George Szanto of Packaging Digest, about the impact of social media on sustainable packaging.

A separate report piloted by PMMI, The Association

for Packaging and Processing Technologies, threw some light on how people treat sustainable packaging as a practice. PMMI discovered that the increased public awareness towards environmental issues led to a greater demand for sustainable packaging and processing. For instance, industries are now warming up to the idea of sustainable packaging. With a share of 54%, as expected, the food packaging industry has the lion's share of the sustainable packaging market. Healthcare is also upping its sustainable game,



with four of twenty most sustainable companies from the healthcare sector.

Adding to the big switch to sustainable packaging, the study showcased the specific sustainable packaging goals of some respondents from different industries such as food, household products, beverages, personal care/cosmetics, electronics, and medical supplies. Reducing packaging weight, building recovery infrastructure, increasing recyclability of packaging, and reducing energy consumption are just some of their sustainable packaging goals.

Several companies and organizations have already switched to

sustainable packaging in remarkable ways. In 2010, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) unveiled a redesigned packaging made of high-density polyethylene supplement bottle in a bold, full-body shrink-sleeve label that contained all product information. GSK claims that the new package saves approximately 208 tons of paper, or 1,440 trees; and eliminates nearly 330,000lb of CO² emissions in the atmosphere.

In Costa Rica, Pizza Hut designed pizza boxes which can be broken down into plates and smaller boxes for leftovers.

As part of its 2020 Sustainability Goals, grocery

retailer Kroger Co. recently joined the Sustainable Packaging Coalition and reiterated their commitment to stop excess packaging for the next three years. “Our membership in this coalition is an important part of Kroger’s vision for achieving Zero Hunger | Zero Waste, a key component of how we are living our purpose driven by our Restock Kroger Plan. We look forward to collaborating with other brands, packaging manufacturers and other stakeholders to drive positive change in packaging sustainability,” Jessica Adelman, Kroger’s group vice president of corporate affairs, said. 

In an effort to promote sustainability in the fast food industry, Pizza Hut unveiled its redesigned pizza boxes in Costa Rica that can be broken into smaller pieces used for leftovers.

Photo credit:
<http://slice.seriousseats.com/>

Integrating Country Strategy Papers into your Acquisition Process

Poverty alleviation, peace building, quality education and climate change are just a few of the major concerns set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Reaching the 17 goals listed in this Agenda by the year 2030 would not be possible without a clear coordination and harmonization of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) strategies and National Governments' priorities.

IFIs use Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) to establish a selective program of indicative interventions based on the Governments' priorities and own vision for the long-term development. Therefore, each CSP is prepared individually for each partner country and clearly identifies future needs and challenges facing the partner government and the budgets IFI will be allocating to tackle them.

A Country Strategy begins with a country diagnosis- analysis of the political, economic, social and environmental situation, previous market failures, cultural implications - and studies of constraints for sustainable development and poverty reduction. Then, IFIs turn these studies of constraints into opportunities by identifying key areas where they have a comparative advantage, and where their assistance can have the most impact. CSPs, through such initiatives, become a roadmap for the IFI's support to the country and have the potential to range across the entire spectrum of issues.


Through careful study of CSPs, it is usually possible to foresee future projects. Spotting projects early allows leading companies to have the



DevelopmentAid is the world's leading online platform that provides comprehensive information services related to Tenders&Grants, development sector companies and their track record, an updated database of individual consultants and many more. For additional information visit www.developmentaid.org



advantage of positioning themselves through foresight accorded by these CSPs, resulting in higher chances of being successful in their future bids for projects.

All the updated Country Strategy Papers from over 30 bilateral and multilateral donors can be found and downloaded from <https://www.developmentaid.org>. 

No Monkey Business, This!

By Nandhini Shanmugam

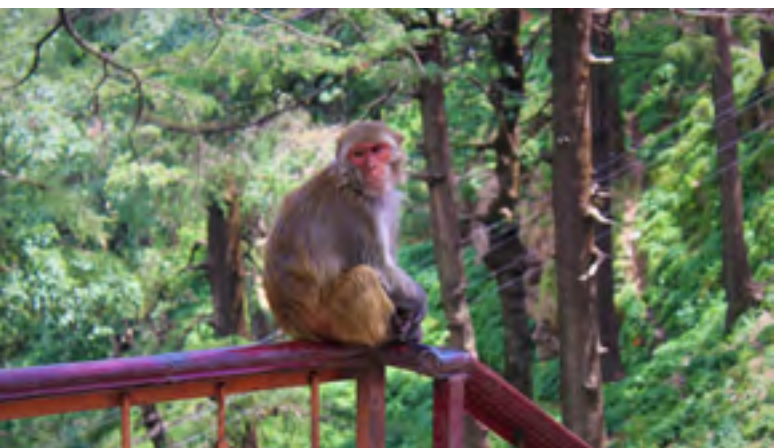


Photo credit: pixabay.com

The development sector often takes you far and wide—to places you may not necessarily find on Google Maps, where electricity is still a rarity, where the discovery of a toilet is cause enough for celebration.

Typically, these are places you reach after bumpy rides make you aware of your anatomy like never before.

Of course, what makes it worthwhile are the many wonderful and beautiful experiences you encounter during every visit. I've always believed that my travels have prepared me to deal with just about any situation.

That was until I landed in the Valley of Dehradun, all the way across the country.

I dreamt of clear blue skies, mighty mountains, chirping of birds, a star-studded skyline, and beautiful weather. Dehradun did not disappoint and gave me all of it. What I had not foreseen was the nitty gritty of the endeavour: coexisting with nature in general and with a bunch of simians in particular.

The next 18 months were spent honing my professional skill sets and developing some important strategies to co-exist with my cohabitants viz. the brown Rhesus monkeys. And they returned the favour by reminding me of some best practices that tend to slip our mind as we rush from one project to the other.

LESSON 1: **Know your target group**

Baseline studies and needs assessment are expected to be factored in while developing interventions.

However, sometimes, no matter how genuine the intent, activities designed run the risk of prioritising donor expectations, the NGOs' human and financial crunch, rather than meeting target group expectations.

Now, the Rhesus monkey has understood its target group – you and me – very well. And it acts based on its analysis of this group. This is the message one monkey passes on to another:

- Fearlessly approach women (preferably single) or young children; grab from them as you please, be it a bag of veggies or a corn cob.
- When amongst families or couples – give out your most heart-melting expression and be rest assured of a stake from their platter; it's a win-win for all.
- Food waste is dumped into large bins every day,

make sure you beat the ragpicker to it.

- Every day around noon schoolchildren open their lunch box, make sure to be around.

This analysis of theirs is purely experiential. Decades ago, women and children would generously feed the Rhesus monkeys, an act the locals believe is responsible for removing the fear of this group in monkeys.

Since it understands its target group so well and has answers to the Ws and H – What, Why, Where, Who and How – it is assured its daily bread and butter. So next time we design any kind of activity be it an event or intervention let's relook the way we answer our Ws and H!

Sometimes in our **rush to show results**, we **miss respecting both the space** we are entering and the opinions of its inhabitants.

LESSON 2: **Show respect**

How much of a threat can an animal that barely measures up your thighs be? Well, quite a bit, as it turned out. My first close shave was when a baby monkey ran towards me, undeterred by my size. What began as an enjoyable morning walk turned into a helpless sprint downhill. I learnt my lesson. The next time I went for a walk and found a bunch of monkeys on my path, I simply did an about-turn and marched off in the opposite direction.

I call it “respecting their space”.

I also realised that for the monkeys, their space was their sanctum sanctorum, and any intrusion into it was seen as a threat; perhaps that’s why the monkeys believed attack was the best form of defence.

In simple words, you mind your business and they will mind theirs.

As development professionals, we often find ourselves entering the sanctum sanctorum of underserved communities.


As we go about brandishing our noble intentions of providing them a better life, haven’t we faced resistance? We blame it on ignorance, illiteracy, attitude, a conservative mind-set and what not. But maybe that resistance also has to do with the fact that the target community has not yet warmed up to our presence in their sanctum sanctorum. That sometimes in our rush to show results we miss respecting both the space we are entering and the opinions of its inhabitants. However, if we do navigate our way around this sanctum sanctorum in harmony with the people we intend to serve then we and our good interventions will be received with open arms.

LESSON 3: **United we stand, divided we fall**

In general, I noticed that monkeys moved in groups. Together, they would find food, rest, pick ticks off each other, play, and scare helpless passers-by (again, me)! When alone, they

were their weakest. But together they were capable of anything and everything – rummaging through your personal belongings, making a daring entry into your unattended home, snatching food items you carried, or uprooting vegetables you planted. It always reminded me of one fundamental truth – alone we can do so little, together we can do so much!

There’s so much promising work happening in our sector. Imagine the difference we can make if we increase the exchange of resources, ideas, and knowledge amongst us. The monkeys taught me to look for partners wherever expertise already exists. To work with, rather than work alongside. After all, like the monkeys, we are trying to shake things up.

It’s been a year since I left Dehradun. Do I miss the place? Very much. My friends? Even more. Mountains, the weather, the chirping of birds, the star-lit sky? Undoubtedly. And the monkeys? Now that’s a guess for you to take! 

LEAP OF REASON: MANAGING TO OUTCOMES IN AN ERA OF SCARCITY

By Mario Morino

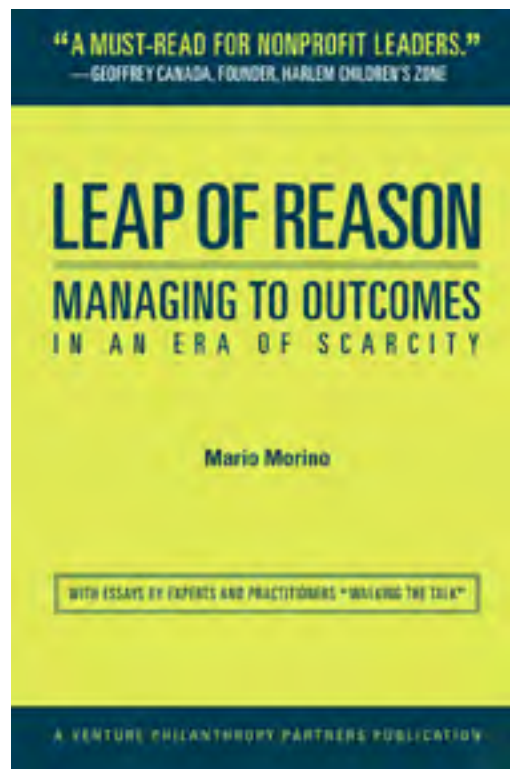
Culture is the Key

In my forty-plus years of experience in the for-profit and nonprofit sectors, I have come to see that there's a common denominator among organizations that manage to outcomes successfully: They all have courageous leaders who foster a performance culture. An organization's culture has a huge impact on whether the organization can achieve what it hopes to for those it serves. To me, all organizations should strive not only to foster a healthy culture, where their people understand the mission and feel appreciated for their role in fulfilling it. They should also strive to nurture a performance culture.

Once again, I use the term "performance culture" with some trepidation. I know it's radioactive for some, especially those in the education field.

But the term as I'm using it shouldn't be threatening. I mean simply that the organization should have the mindset to do what it does as well as it possibly can and continually seek to do even better.

For example, there are many teachers I know who would not naturally see themselves as representing or contributing to a performance culture per se. And yet they stay after school to tutor or counsel; grade papers late into the night; care immensely about helping students learn and grow; and even show up to cheer their students on at games, plays, and other events. These teachers may not see what they do as being driven by a performance mentality, but their actions in serving their students speak louder than words.



Paperback: 149 pages

Publisher: Venture Philanthropy Partners (2011)

A Great Culture Starts with Great People

Nurturing a performance culture begins with recruiting, developing, and retaining the talented professionals you need to fulfill your mission.

Failure to do so is, to me, literally a dereliction of duty of board and management—from executive director to line supervisor. Board and management need to "get the right people on the bus, in the right seats," in the famous words of management expert Jim Collins.

I'm a big believer in the notion that what makes things happen is people. Best practices are wonderful, but they are most effective in the hands of highly talented people. I'd take the best talent over best practices and great plans any day of the week. Too many of us think that organizations and systems solve our challenges. They play a vital role, but the key lies in the people who execute those plans.

To amplify this point, I will share a long quotation from a leader of great distinction in the educational, philanthropic, and nonprofit sectors: *I despair over the money being expended by our sector on evaluation, measurement, etc. The simple truth is that if you don't stay focused on the quality and energy of leadership, all the rest is beside the point. We all continue to avoid the tough but vital question of gauging... the assessment of the human element... My own experience that now stretches over fifty years is that we are a long way from quantifying the critical element of judgment.*

So this is the basic question: Do you have the right talent, leadership, and judgment in place to execute your mission? Next to questioning the mission itself periodically, this is the most important question boards and management must ask themselves.

Asking and answering this “hot potato” question is difficult. It might require change and improvement on the part of those already on the bus, *including the person driving it*. It might require bringing different people on the bus. Most often it requires a combination of the two.

The truth is that we're not good at this type of change in our sector. We often sacrifice the quality of our programs and services in order to protect those who aren't doing their jobs well.

Why? For one thing, we generally lack effective ways to assess the performance of staff so that we can help them improve or move on. More important, executives just don't want to deal with the confrontation that's sometimes required when we know a staff member's performance isn't good enough. We avoid providing the honest, constructive feedback people need to improve. When steps for improvement don't work, we are loath to make changes, especially terminations, lest we rock the boat. Too many of us allow appeasement and accommodation to override doing our best for those we serve.

It's a delicate balance when you're dealing with someone's career (and livelihood). Candidly, there are times I've made the go/no-go call too quickly. I've seen people develop to become solid performers, even leaders in their organizations, after I thought they weren't going to make it. Fortunately, others saw something in them that warranted going the extra step.

Such decisions are never to be taken lightly, and there's no checklist of steps. It comes back to the quality of judgment of those making the decisions. Intuition and instincts are an important part of the equation. **i**

“Do you have the right talent, leadership, and judgment in place to execute your mission? Next to questioning the mission itself periodically, this is the most important question boards and management must ask themselves.”



Mario Morino

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EVERLASTING BEAUTY: AWARDS HIGHLIGHT SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS OF INDUSTRY

The recent Sustainable Beauty Awards recognized the change in the products and processes adopted by the cosmetics industry.

By iMPACT Staff

Winners of the 2017 Sustainability Beauty Awards, announced in Paris on November 6, provided insights into the ways cosmetics companies are embracing the principles of sustainability in various facets of their businesses.

The winners of the different categories—Green Formulations, Sustainable Packaging, Sustainable Ingredient, Sustainability Pioneer, and Sustainability Leadership—demonstrated a commitment to change within and without.

While AAK of Sweden bagged the Sustainability Pioneer award for its sustainable sourcing programmes for its shea butter range of products, where it works with over 115,000 women in West Africa, Aveda USA bagged the Sustainability Leadership award, for its wide range of initiatives. Aveda is involved in a variety of sustainability initiatives in its entire production cycle and beyond, from sourcing of the ingredients to waste management, continuing



to its various corporate philanthropy projects.

In the Green Formulation category, organic roses sourced for a skin care range were the key to Alteya Organics of Bulgaria winning the award. Sulapac of Finland won the Sustainable Packaging award for its packaging made from renewable wood chips from sustainable managed forests. The company has earlier also won the Green Alley award, an award focused on the circular economy.

Neal's Yard Remedies of the U.K. won the Sustainable Ingredient award for its Frankincense Boswellia Sacra Resin

Extract, made from spent resin from the distillation of frankincense oils in Oman.

The Sustainable Beauty Awards, organized by Ecovia Intelligence, aims to recognize organizations that are pushing the boundaries of sustainability in the beauty industry.

The beauty industry has been taking giant steps in addressing the issue of sustainability, especially after the spotlight on microplastic ingredients in cosmetics contributing to the plastic soup in the oceans.

According to Beat the Microbead, a campaign by the Plastic Soup Foundation, more than 448 brands from 119 manufacturers have

promised to remove plastic microbeads from their products. The campaign also promotes the idea of a “Zero Plastic Inside” logo, where brands and companies that do not use microplastic ingredients declare the same on their packaging.

Campaigns such as Beat the Microbead have catalysed change, as governments around the world have kickstarted legislation to ban microplastic ingredients in cosmetics. As more governments follow suit, the industry is poised for another round of innovation, this time in the field of sustainability. 

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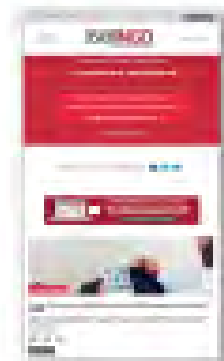
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