The mission of Asia Initiatives (AI) is to leverage the power of social capital to promote healthcare, education and sustainable development, to bring positive change in the life of people in underserved communities.
At Asia Initiatives we believe, as do nearly all development organizations now, that empowering women is the most powerful and cost-effective way to help communities work towards a more just, equitable and peaceful world. So I am glad to note that 2018 has been another milestone year towards gender equality. The New York Stock Exchange has its first woman leader ever, Rwanda elected a majority-female legislature, and a record number of women now serve in the U.S. Congress, and in the Indian Cabinet.

Nonetheless, we are still far from equal opportunities for women, especially for poor women. The World Bank reported that women account for less than 33% of the workforce in low- and middle-income countries, and it may take another 217 years at the current rate for this gap to close. This is mostly because Social Capital, a major focus for Asia Initiatives, is not taken into account in such calculations, demeaning the social contributions of women to their communities, families and even to themselves. So true development now needs to occur on two fronts: acknowledgement that social and ecological capital are as important as financial capital, and equal opportunities for women at the financial table.

In 2018, Asia Initiatives is proud to have helped uplift the lives of 6,500 women and their communities in a sustainable way around the world through 14 projects in three countries.

Our highest source of encouragement and support continues to be our individual donors. Grants from foundations for specific projects and our consulting revenue supplement this. In 2018, we received grants from the Lush Foundation for our education project for 600 girls in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. We also received a grant from the Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation to support goat rearing for marginal income and landless women farmers in Bundelkhand, India.

We are also excited to have launched two new initiatives on a much larger scale than ever before. One is with the government of Andhra Pradesh to integrate SoCCs in the design, development and maintenance of the new capital city of Amaravati. The second project is a partnership with the SaveLIFE Foundation to use SoCCs for promoting safe driving on the Mumbai Pune Expressway through an App.

We ended the year on a high note with our annual gala. We had the honor of welcoming back the 8th UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, to present the Ban Ki-moon Award for Women's Empowerment to Dr. Chelsea Clinton and Dr. Susan Blaustein, two inspiring women who have worked tirelessly to improve the lives of women around the world. We were truly grateful and honored to celebrate their achievements.

As 2018 comes to an end, we recommit ourselves to serving the women and their families in our programs, and invite you to join us on this important journey.

Geeta Mehta, PhD, AIA

President
A SNAPSHOT OF OUR IMPACT IN 2018

Made possible through our community currency for social good

2000 girls learned life skills
1300 women and girls gained access to sanitary napkins through AI-funded women entrepreneurs
1000 women started micro-poultry farming
600 children gained regular access to computers
500 families gained access to clean drinking water
280 women worked to resolve local community conflicts
250 women received smokeless wood stoves
250 women were granted cattle loans
200 women adopted sustainable fishing practices
PROMISE OF OUR IMPACT IN 2019

8000 trees to be planted by students from 25 schools

1200 girls will continue school, attend lessons on digital literacy, menstrual hygiene and nutrition

1060 tribal women's micro credit society to be set up

700 farmers in drought-prone regions will practice water-efficient and low cost organic farming

700 women will be educated and empowered

450 women will start kitchen gardens

200 girls and women will learn computer and English skills to prepare them for the job market

200 women will kickstart micro-poultry enterprises

70 women will get loans for breeding goats

50 farmers will diversify into floriculture

8 schools in 13 tribal villages will start plant nurseries

3 villages will establish all-women Pani Panchayats

An Android App to facilitate SoCC transactions will be launched.
“During my tenure as Secretary-General, I always worked to make women’s empowerment a top priority and I can see that Asia Initiatives is carrying on that legacy.”
- Eighth UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

“The Social Capital Credits program is a proven, powerful tool for advancing social justice by acknowledging the contributions of individuals and rewarding them and their communities for their efforts.”
- Susan Blaustein, Founder and Executive Director of WomenStrong International
Social Capital Credits (SoCCs) are an innovative community currency that help people take charge of developing their own neighborhoods and improving their lives. Individuals earn SoCCs by performing acts of social good, such as cleaning up the neighborhood, planting trees or mentoring youth, and redeem SoCCs for vital resources, such as education, healthcare and skill empowerment.
**COSTA RICA**
Curridabat. SoCCs program for neighborhood safety designed at the request of the office of the Mayor

**KENYA**
Kisumu. Manyatta Neighborhood improvement Project with Alice Visionary Foundation Project and WomenStrong International

**GHANA**
Kumasi. Bantama Market project with Women's Health for Wealth and WomenStrong International

**UNITED STATES**
Portland Summers project promoting STEM education for adolescents with Girls Lead
Washington D. C., empowering women through financial literacy, skill building and health workshops with WomenStrong International

**INDIA**
Ahmedabad, Self Employed Women’s Association Project with PepsiCo Foundation
Ahmedabad, adolescent girls and women’s empowerment project with Center for Development
Bundelkhand, food security through kitchen gardens with Parmarth Samaj Sevi Sansthan
Beed District, rainwater harvesting with Save Indian Farmers
Bhubaneswar, digital literacy for children with VIEWS Odisha
Bori Sinh, cattle loans and check dams for rainwater harvesting with Save Indian Farmers
Dehradun, biodiversity preservation and livelihood support for tribal communities with Friends of Doon Society
Delhi, women’s financial inclusion project with Ruaab Self Employed Women’s Association
Kolkata, nurse’s assistant training project with Avenue Welfare Society
Lucknow, micro-poultry farming and empowering girls through digital literacy with Shohratgarh Environmental Society
Madurai, Vaigai river restoration project with Dhan Foundation
Mahad, micro-poultry farming with Shramjivi Janata Sahayyak Mandal
Villupuram, Vinayagampet & Pudukottai. Biovillage program, well-desilting, enhancing livelihood with M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation
Yavatmal, digital knowledge center with Deendayal Bahuuddeshiya Prasarak Mandal
In 2015, Al launched a program to provide girls with skills to enter the job market. Girls have access to mentoring, homework help, digital literacy training and a safe space to discuss socially taboo topics such as reproductive health care. Girls earn SoCCs by tutoring five other girls in their neighborhoods three times a week and by contributing to street cleanup efforts and public awareness campaigns. SoCCs are redeemed for English, Math and computer lessons, as well as individual computer time.

Gitanjali underwent training on the Right to Education Act and was able to help seven children attend private schools and obtain high-quality education that would not be possible otherwise.
AI has executed a program to uplift the living conditions of the Tongia tribe that has recently been evicted from the forest made into the Rajaji National Reserve. The villagers face challenges from the lack of resources and skills. AI holds awareness camps to spread knowledge regarding environmental conservation and trains villagers in sustainable agriculture by planting tree saplings and fodder as well as in building small kitchen gardens and compost pits. Other initiatives include education programs for children and adults, solar street light installations and village cleanliness drives.
This project includes working with farmers in 42 villages in the Bundelkhand region to solve issues related to droughts and floods where unseasonal weather patterns have resulted in high poverty levels and uncertainties in cultivation. This project was launched to provide on-field training to establish wastewater-fed kitchen gardens and health camps for families. Women have earned tools to start kitchen gardens and participated in on-field trainings. Consequently, kitchen gardens have raised family incomes, lessened food security concerns, improved nutritional values and food diversity. They have also resulted in environmental benefits through recycling water and waste nutrients.

As the treasurer of her Self Help Group, Kiran Devi encouraged 14 women in her village to create a savings account for themselves. By setting up kitchen gardens, their families have become self-sufficient and also consume fresh and nutritional vegetables.
Micro-poultry farming

AI has launched a poultry farming project in Shohratgarh, India, an area prone to natural disasters and mostly occupied by poor landless agricultural laborers. Our project works with 498 women in ten villages, helping them start and maintain small-scale poultry farms. Women earn SoCCs for attending monthly meetings, where they are taught financial literacy and trained to address gender discrimination and other issues. They can then redeem SoCCs for pre-vaccinated chicks to start their farms.

Sangeeta redeemed SoCCs to supplement her family’s income with a poultry farming venture. Two months in, her earnings encouraged her to scale up her operations. The second time round, she tripled her inventory. The project assisted her in acquiring the technical skills required to operate at a large scale.
Even though she is illiterate, Shiv Devi believes that girls’ education is important. Apart from learning in school, she also believes in her three daughters needing soft & technical skills like English speaking and computer skills which would prepare them for jobs. She has championed the cause of girls education in her neighborhood.

Empowering girls through digital literacy

AI has launched a project designed to help young girls, who live in informal settlements, receive inadequate education and face issues related to gender inequality and poverty. AI has created ten Gender Resource Centers, which provide girls access to reading and learning materials, recreational equipment and facilitate easy access to additional help. The girls earn SoCCs by tutoring three girls three years younger than themselves. They can redeem SoCCs for school supplies, sanitary products, English speaking and computer classes.

Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
AI has created a Digital Knowledge Center program to teach digital literacy to students, which is a crucial skill to remain competitive in the workforce. The children earn SoCCs for providing homework help to younger children; they can redeem SoCCs for computer lessons taught by qualified teachers. The computer courses consist of basic computer and systems overview, Microsoft Office usage, and internet familiarity. The program now includes adult women, as well as school students.

**Yavatmal, Maharashtra**
AI has worked to empower tribal women through micro-poultry farming, making fishing nets, and health initiatives. Through our SoCCs program, the project ensured income opportunities and better health for people. Our project includes 1,060 members from 45 tribal self-help groups in 12 village hamlets. After the community gained sufficient confidence, it prepared to form a cooperative registered with the government. This required the community to also pool in funds. AI provided this funding to help form the first Cooperative created by tribals in this area.

Baby Marvat Jadhav says, “Often I would feel helpless that my family could not provide light to my children, and at night we feared snakes and scorpions. My children would do their school homework in the neighbor’s house. My children and I do not suffer anymore due to the solar light that we have received. I am grateful to the donors for illuminating my home.”

Mahad, Maharashtra
Water conservation in 6 villages

AI supports water conservation activities in 6 villages. Rain deficiencies have worsened the food and water crisis in the area, especially for populations dependent on farming. To resolve this crisis, six villages participated in the Water Cup competition organized by Paani Foundation, where the AI grant paid for diesel and other necessities. They have been digging trenches and dams, planting nurseries, and constructing water harvesting structures to prevent soil erosion and conserve water to get an additional crop.

Beed, Maharashtra
ASIA INITIATIVES FULFILLS
14 OUT OF 17
UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
This year we were honored to welcome back the eight United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to present the Ban Ki-moon Award for Women’s Empowerment to Dr. Chelsea Clinton of the Clinton Foundation and Dr. Susan Blaustein of WomenStrong International.
THANK YOU TO OUR 2018 INDIVIDUAL DONORS

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Saung Budeya Dance Troupe
Little Market
Impala, Inc.
Noda Sensei
Priya Darshini and Max ZT
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

WE ARE GROWING!

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Expenses</th>
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<td>2018</td>
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2018 INCOME

$446,613.85
52% Gala Donations
21% General Donations
20% Grants
7% Other

AND over 4500 Volunteer hours of Social Capital

2018 EXPENDITURE

$335,197
85% Programming
12% Admin
3% Fundraising

AUDIT REVIEW

Mike Hassanali, of M.Hassanali CPA, PLLC conducted an Audit Review of Asia Initiatives 2017 accounts at our request, and found the accounts and procedures satisfactory. The full report is available at AI office for review.
NETWORK & PARTNERS

Field Partners
Alice Visionary Foundation Project, Kenya
Centre for Development (CfD), Ahmedabad, India
Deendayal Trust, Maharashtra, India
Friends of the Doon Society (FODS), Madhya Pradesh, India
Kadam Resource Center for Girls (KRCG), Ahmedabad, India
M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), Chennai, India
Parmarth Samaj Sevi Sansthan, Bundelkhand, India
Save Indian Farmers (SIF), Maharashtra, India
Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA), India
SEWA Ruaab, Delhi, India
Shramjivi Janata Sahayyak Mandal, Maharashtra, India
Shohratgarh Environmental Society (SES), Uttar Pradesh, India
Women’s Health to Wealth (WHW), Kumasi, Ghana
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