To empower under-served communities by leveraging the power of their social capital to promote better livelihoods, education, healthcare, and sustainable development.
Dear Friends of Asia Initiatives,

“There was never a night or a problem that could defeat sunrise or hope.”– Bernard Williams

While we all hope that Covid-19 will be behind us soon, I am pleased to report that 2021 was Asia Initiatives’ biggest year yet, in terms of the number of people we could serve and the level of support we were able to provide. Thanks to our many, generous supporters who stepped up their funding to provide a safety net for communities and strengthen their social capital, as they dealt with the pandemic, climate events, and the resultant financial shocks.

One highlight of this year was receiving the coveted Jacobs Foundation Conference Grand Innovation Prize, which helped us expand our Cascade of Learning program teaching young people employable skills in Lucknow, Odisha, and Yavatmal. Our girls in Lucknow held their first-ever Technology Fair inspired by our partner KidsWhoKode. Girls also learned life skills and health modules in the girls clubs organized by our partner Global G.L.O.W. We are grateful to our many volunteers who held Zoom classes for our children and also taught computer skills and financial literacy to formerly incarcerated women in New York. We supported Covid-19 Care Centers in Yavatmal, Bundelkhand, and Darjeeling in the lower Himalayas. Awareness campaigns were held across 154 villages that also provided testing, vaccinations, food kits, masks, hygiene supplies, and hand sanitizers across our programs.

We also launched our new Cascades of Up-skilling initiative this year. An example of this is in Maharashtra where women farmers learning the improved SRI (System of Rice Intensification) method and will teach other women farmers, who will then teach others. Our Nutrition Gardens in India and Kenya, partially supported by our partner FrauenPower are examples of the sustainable livelihood and environmental sustainability initiative. Our newly established Maker Labs are enabling young people from under-served areas to transform their innovative ideas into marketable products. Volunteer architects and urban designers in our team helped conduct a user survey at the New York City Housing Authority project, and designed housing for migrant workers in Maharashtra.

We were thrilled to be selected for the Ernst and Young Ripples program, through which we received three months of intensive mentoring from two wonderful professionals in preparing our strategic plan. Our Gala had to be online this year also. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon was our chief guest again this year, and conferred the 5th Annual Ban Ki-moon Award for Women’s Empowerment on Dr. Paul Polman and Dr. Lee Bae-yong.

All our work is made possible through our partnerships with local NGOs, the hard work and resilience of the people we serve, our staff, and the generosity of our donors.

With my deep gratitude to all for this wonderful support,

Geeta Mehta
Our impact in 2021

WHAT WE DID IN 2021

- 300,000 persons received Covid-19 related information across 154 villages
- 25,000 people received direct humanitarian aid
- 18,500 trees planted
- 367 children learned digital skills
- 200 women attended tailoring workshops
- 1,400 bird perches were installed in farms
- 1,400 homemade non-chemical insect sticky traps installed in farms
- 200 women grew organic nutrition gardens
- 1,800 women took up organic farming
- 25,000 people received direct humanitarian aid
- 900 girls signed up to learn life skills
- 2000 women grew organic nutrition gardens
- 1,400 women received microloans for goat rearing
- Over 106 youth received spoken-English lessons via Zoom
- 100 girls joined girls clubs to learn life skills, healthcare, selfcare
- 100 women attended menstrual health and hygiene workshops and reusable products
- 550 women learnt and implemented the System of Rice Cultivation
- 45 women received microloans for goat rearing
- 200 girls joined girls clubs to learn life skills, healthcare, selfcare
- 300,000 persons received Covid-19 related information across 154 villages
2021 Annual Asia Initiatives Gala

“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.”

—Ban Ki-moon, Eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations

Dr. Paul Polman,
Gala Honoree 2021

Dr. Lee Bae-yong,
Gala Honoree 2021

Ricky Kej,
AI Goodwill Ambassador

Natalie Nascenzi,
Gala MC
SoCCs (Social Capital Credits) is an award winning community currency created by Asia Initiatives that helps people take charge of developing their own communities and improving their lives. SoCCs are earned for performing acts of social good, such as waste management, planting trees, rainwater harvesting, and tutoring or mentoring youth.

SoCCs can be redeemed for critical resources like very low interest micro-credit, digital and financial skills training, healthcare and livelihood support. Since 2015, SoCCs have been implemented successfully in over 26 sites across India, Ghana, Kenya and the United States.
We welcome you to join our SoCCs community

Click [HERE](#) to register on the SoCCs web platform.

The SoCCs App and Platform facilitates all steps of the SoCCs process.

SoCCratic dialogues help our communities develop their own SoCC Earning and Redeeming menus. SoCC data collection methods range from completely online to hybrid versions. This data is carefully analyzed to ensure that communities are making progress towards the goals they have set, or to make modifications in the nature or number of activities. It also allows our key funders to get transparent reports on how their donations have a multiplier effect with SoCCs.
Asia Initiatives was selected for the EY Ripples program and received 3 months of consulting help for our Strategic Plan.
Initiatives & Projects

Poverty is a result of an interlocking set of circumstances. So Asia Initiatives projects take a multifaceted approach for sustainable development.

- Education & Technology Initiative
- Micro Credit and Livelihood Initiative
- Environmental Sustainability Initiative
- Health Initiative
- Community Initiative
Technology has become synonymous with opportunity. Our digitally linked Learning Centers provide under-served communities access to cutting edge educational and digital learning opportunities that lead to better livelihoods.
CASCADES OF LEARNING: Computer Skills For Adolescents From Underserved Communities

**Location:** Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Maharashtra, India
**Partner:** Shohratgarh Environmental Society, Voluntary Integration for Education and Welfare of Society, Deendayal BahuUddeshiya Prasarak Mandal
**Knowledge partner:** Kids Who Kode
**Funding partner:** FrauenPower

Through our Cascades of Learning program, Asia Initiatives is transforming digital learning by incentivizing peer-to-peer mentoring. Adolescents tutor two children 3 years or more younger, to earn SoCCs (Social Capital Credits) that they redeem for courses designed by Kids Who Kode in AI funded Learning Centers. Through these trainings, the girls are developing job readiness skills.
CASCADES OF LEARNING: Zoom SoCCs Buddies

**Location:** Lucknow, Odisha and Yavatmal, India

**Partners:** Shohratgarh Environmental Society, Voluntary Integration for Education and Welfare of Society, Deendayal BahuUddeshiya Prasarak Mandal

Over 200 youth across our educational programs have been receiving tutoring on spoken English and other subjects through our interactive “SoCCs Buddies” program since 2020. This was especially helpful when children could not attend school due to the lockdowns. Our wonderful volunteers from all over the world conduct sessions using material designed by our education advisors and the Center for Living City. Students are also developing critical thinking skills through this program.
CASCADES OF LEARNING: Design Thinking and Entrepreneurship Training Through Maker Labs

**Location:** Rajasthan, India
**Partner:** Mantra Social Services, Vidhyalay Udhyam

The 5 Maker Labs supported by Asia Initiatives are currently serving 500 young children from vulnerable socioeconomic groups who are at great risk of being forced into child labor. SoCCs are earned by each participant by peer-mentoring 2 younger children, and redeemed to attend Maker Labs, where they learn design thinking, entrepreneurship and get seed grants to develop prototypes for their innovations. Solar powered phone chargers for farmers and touch free hand sanitizer dispensers are just some of the exciting innovations emerging from this program!
Women in Asia Initiatives projects are using the SoCCs program to secure low-interest loans to develop or expand their businesses, ensuring financial security for their families whilst advancing their sense of confidence and personal empowerment.
Tribal Microcredit Cooperative

Location: Maharashtra, India
Partners: Shramjivi Janata Sahayyak Mandal (SJSM)

This program helped the tribal community in remote areas of the Western Ghats region form a microcredit cooperative with 2353 members with the help of our local partner SJSM. The cooperative provides low-interest loans to support education, livelihood and food security among the indigenous populations. The program had a 97% loan recovery rate. SoCCs are redeemed for low-interest micro-credit from the cooperative and livelihood activities such as poultry and fishing. SoCCs were also used to incentivize COVID-19 vaccination and regular participation in cleanliness and sanitation drives.
Low-Interest Micro-Credit Loans for Sustainable Livelihoods

Location: Bundelkhand, India
Partners: Parmarth Samaj Sewi Sansthan
Funding Partner: Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation

This program is helping 200 female farmers launch micro dairy farming enterprises. The women earn SoCCs by attending monthly meetings and managing waste in their neighborhoods. They redeem SoCCs for low-interest micro-credit, veterinary support to purchase and rear goats, and insurance. Women also meet with agriculture department representatives, form linkages with government-sponsored schemes, and attend goat health camps. Despite immense challenges resulting from the second wave of COVID-19, this program provided a safety net to many families during multiple lockdowns and in the absence of regular income.
Job Readiness for Formerly Incarcerated and First Generation Immigrants Women

Location: New York City  
Partner: HOUR Working Women  
Funding Partner: PricewaterhouseCoopers

This program includes formerly incarcerated individuals and first-generation immigrants. Participants earn SoCCs for office and boutique upkeep, language support and tutoring to others, computer help, and cooking for new arrivals and their families. Participants redeem SoCCs for computer and financial literacy classes to acquire job readiness skills.
THE ZURI INITIATIVE: Sustainable Beauty Products

**Location:** Nairobi, Kenya  
**Partner:** The Zuri Initiative; FrauenPower

Zuri Women’s Empowerment Program (2020 – 21) provided training on technical, marketing and entrepreneurial skills for women to work as sales agents for the Zuri Hair Products. These are organic products created especially for black hair, and sold on commission basis. Having learned leadership skills, several participants of the program also supported Covid awareness campaigns for their communities.
THE ZURI INITIATIVE: Vertical Kitchen Gardens

**Location:** Nairobi, Kenya  
**Partner:** The Zuri Initiative; FrauenPower

This project helped women in the informal settlements of Kibera in Nairobi, Kenya, one of the largest informal communities in the world. Over 100 women earned SoCCs for planting native trees in their community spaces, segregating, and managing their waste. SoCCs were redeemed for vertical nutrition garden kits. By growing spinach and other leafy vegetables, they strengthened the nutritional security of their families. There were many challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the women came together to help each other through this initiative.
Organic Nutrition Gardens

**Location:** Jharkhand, Odisha, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh, India

**Partners:** VIEWS (Voluntary Integration for Education and Welfare of Society), Deendayal BahuUddeshiya Prasarak Mandal, Samanta Foundation, Mata Balak Utkarsha Pratishthan, and Savera Foundation

**Funding Partner (Partial):** FrauenPower

The AI-supported Organic Kitchen Garden program helped ensure food security and improved incomes for rural communities. We also incentivized forest fringe communities to restore the local ecosystem upon which they are dependent. Participants earn SoCCs by planting fruit trees, preparing and throwing seed balls for forest restoration, waste management and activating village-level women-led institutions. Participants redeem SoCCs for vegetable seeds, inputs, equipment, horticulture training, and marketing assistance. The 2000 Organic Kitchen Gardens created within the villages proved very helpful during Covid-19 when many families lost other sources of income. Women who excelled at this program are now teaching others.
Seedless Lemon Tree Plantation Agro-business

**Location:** Assam, India  
**Partners:** Sankalptaru Foundation

AI is supporting a seedless lemon tree planting program to empower 200 small female farmers in Assam, India. Women earn SoCCs by segregating waste, contributing to organic compost, and engaging in community waste management activities. They redeem SoCCs for seedless lemon tree saplings, training on the care and management of seedless lemon trees, and marketing assistance. The trees bear fruit in 3-5 years, after which there is a significant income increase over the next decade or more.
Organic Farming For Income Generation in Drought-Prone Regions

**Location:** Maharashtra, India  
**Partner:** Deendayal Bahuudeshiya Prasarak Mandal

This project helped 800 women farmers earn an income and become self-reliant by building nutrition gardens using low-cost farming techniques and nature-adapted solutions. Women earned SoCCs by planting native trees, installing bird perches in their agroecosystems, preparing herbal inputs for improved yields, and setting aside funds for monthly savings. They redeemed SoCCs for regular training from experts, and also reproductive health and hygiene products. Women were proud to become earning members of their household, and enhance food security for their families.
SoCCs promote economic and environmental sustainability in communities through improved farming techniques, water conservation, reforestation and waste management.
Cascade of Up-skilling: System of Rice Intensification

Location: Maharashtra, India
Partner: Dilasa Janvikas Pratishthan

This project is helping 550 women farmers in the Konkan region adopt the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) to increase yields and provide multiple nature-based benefits for the local ecosystem. Women earn SoCCs by installing improved cooking stoves to reduce firewood use and smoke, setting up bird-perches and homemade sticky traps on their farms, and making bunds for water conservation in the fields. They redeem SoCCs for local variety rice seeds, inputs such as Cono Weeders, which frees them from having to bend over paddy for hours. They will also earn SoCCs for training 1100 other farmers in SRI techniques.
Rejuvenation of Traditional Watershed Structures

**Location:** Jharkhand, India  
**Partners:** Savera Foundation

This project is ensuring water security and sustainable livelihood opportunities for 500 households in rural panchayats by reviving traditional watershed structures. The project is also helping to restore the vegetative cover in the area, which in turn enhances water and food security and improves livelihoods by integrated and sustainable watershed management. Participants earn SoCCs by participating in the work, and redeem SoCCs for various items on their SoCCs Redeeming menu.
Participants learn ways to improve their health and hygiene in the health camps we organize. Women and girls also learn about reproductive healthcare choices and resources.
COVID 19 RESILIENCE PROGRAM: Covid-19 Care Centers as Alternatives to Inaccessible Hospitals

Location: Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and North Bengal, India
Partner: Deendeyal Bahuudeshiya Prasarak Mandal, Shramajivi Janata Sahayyak Mandal, Darjeeling Jesuits, and Samanta Foundation

AI supported a rapid response initiative during the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic that gripped India early in 2021. AI-funded education centers were converted into isolation facilities and supported with qualified doctors and nurses. Awareness camps, safety kits, medicines, blood and plasma donation drives, free ambulance services, and outpatient clinics were also established by our local partners. AI helped distribute over 1,000 grocery packages to low-income families and help them establish kitchen gardens for food security during lockdowns. We also organized care centers for children who lost both parents to COVID-19. We will support their education until age 18.
Empowering Women through Health, Education and Training Support

**Location:** Uttarakhand, India  
**Partner:** Samanta Foundation  
**Funding Partner (Partial):** Women’s Rehabilitation Group, NJ

This project supported healthcare, education, and empowerment of over 200 Van Gujjar tribal women living on the outskirts of Rajaji National Park. The Van Gujjar women, who did not have access to formal education opportunities, earn SoCCs by sending their children to school, documenting traditional practices, planting trees, and creating traditional beaded jewelry. Women redeem SoCCs for reproductive health and hygiene products, training on tailoring, and sewing machines for their hamlets. The women also established kitchen gardens as part of AI’s COVID resilience effort.
This initiative encourages people in rural and urban communities to actively participate in improving their neighborhoods.
Movable Housing Design For Migrant Laborers

**Location:** Mahad, India  
**Partners:** Shramjivi Janata Sahayyak Mandal (SJSM)

Tribal workers migrate for about 6-month periods to work in brick kilns and agricultural farms. Consequently, they require a versatile shelter that can travel with them. In collaboration with SJSM, AI’s volunteer architects designed a portable model for the Katkari Tribe in the Mahad area. The design consists of four telescopic columns and a corresponding truss system that is versatile and easy to assemble and dismantle. Once erected, this metal structure can accommodate a roof and walls made of indigenous materials. This degree of customization also enables the users to express their rich cultural identity and claim ownership of their space.
Jefferson Houses User Survey to Improve Public Spaces

Location: New York City
Partners: American Institute of Architects (AIA) New York and New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA)

AI joined a design team to develop a community engagement process to re-imagine the future of public outdoor spaces at NYCHA Jefferson Houses when the City of New York allocated a $3 million budget for this endeavor. The goal was to provide a replicable community engagement model that would inspire other volunteer design teams to partner with NYCHA to engage with volunteer design teams and residents communities.
2021 Revenue
Net Revenue: $808,281
- 47% Gala Donations
- 24% General Donations
- 28% Grants
- 1% Art Sales and Other Revenue

2020 Expenditure
Total: $523,971
- Programming: $464,062
- Admin/Office Expenses/Management: $59,909
Thank you to our 2021 supporters

### $10,000 and above
- Anna May & Tim Feige
- Eva Haller
- A. Rama Krishna
- Usha Kumar
- Kathy Matsui
- Ravi Mehta
- Dr. Amit Patel
- Vinu Patel
- Radhika Sehgal
- Yoshiko & Paul Sheard
- Kylie Schuyler
- Shining Sung

### $5,000 to $9,999
- Susan Blaustein
- Molly Josh
- Alicia Kershaw
- Preeti & Aditya Matto
- Nirmal Matto
- Arjun A Mehta
- Krishen Mehta
- Judy G Smith & BNY Mellon
- Richard Murray
- Douglas Peterson
- Mark & Lisa Schwartz

### $1,000 to $4,999
- Kate Ahn
- Dan Ashton
- Jennifer Bonheur
- Swati Choudhary
- Dodge Cox
- Rita & Arun Duggal
- Eric Durant
- Lawrence English
- Roberta Fineberg
- Peter Finnerty
- Susan Gutfreund
- Lisa Handwerker
- Gita Johar
- Tokufumi Kato
- Monica Khurana

### $999 and under
- Irene Abraham
- Aman Agrawal
- Marva Allen
- James Allyn
- Tanima Ankhi
- Sandra April
- Regula Aregger
- Kate Ascher
- Vijay Bachani
- Maya Ramraj Balkumar
- Debapriya Basu
- Joseph Battat
- Christopher Beal
- Rita E Bernabei
- Saima Bhuiyan
- Lalitha Biddulph
- William Breskman
- James Brooke
- Diane Caminis
- Gerald Castaldo
- Beth Caton
- Ali Cetinkaya
- Shomi Chakrabarti
- Darpan Chakraborty
- Rony Chatterjee
- Angela Cheatham
- Susan Cheatham
- Sunjin Choi
- Lisa Renee Clement
- John V. Connorton Jr.
- Alexis Crow
- Claudette Crow
- Rohit Dandiya
- Kavitha Das
- Olipriya Das
- Sohoni DaS
- Shuvash Datta
- Padmini Dhulipala
- Courtney Doggart
- Christina Dou
- Shivani Dugar
- Mary Frances Dunham
- Katherine Dunham
- Joyce Edward
- Charles Estes
- Gregory Feifer
- Barry Friedberg
- Maida Galvez
- Katherine Georgios
- Hampartsoum Ghazarossian
- Joseph Gilbert
- Rebecca Gill
- Michael Grande
- Roberta Gratz
- Nick Greiner
- Sapna Gupta
- Jos & Merna Guttentag
- Lesley Haberman
- Mark Habib
- Abdul Hamid
- Mehreen Haqqie
- Meredith Hawkins
- Sigrid Hepp-Dax
- Beth Holimon
- Karen Hsu
- Habiba A. Islam
- Viju Jacob
- Charu Jain
- Nidhi Jain
- Kinshuk Jerath
- Kalpana Kanthan
- Puja Kamavat
- Omar Kazi
- Agnes Kelly
- Lili Khansari
- Ateya Khorakiwala
- Hisashi Kobayashi
- Bruce Kogut
- John Korbel
- Yuichiro Kuwama
- Noel V. Lateef
- Arlette Laurent
- Scott Leland
- Greg Lemos-Stein
- David Libertson
- Sher Lokhandwalla
- Ashoke Majumdar
- Atanu Majumdar
- Vijaya Malla KC
- Mohammed Mann
- Abir Mannan
- Terry Marx
- Anne-Marie McCartney
- Margaret S. McCreery
- Barbara McDade Gordon
- Nancy McGaw
- Vishal Merani
- Joshua Milgrim
- Jeremy Millin
- Frank Milne
- Samiya Mir
- Ratnakar Mitra
- Nicholas Moyer
- Madhushree Munsi
- Masaki Nakajima
- Takaaki Nakajima
- Shree Nayar
- Chikako Noguchi
- Erin O’Mara
- Pam Omberg
- Dennis Ortblad
- Masako Osako
- Unnati Oza
- Christine Pagnani
- Mazbeen Palsetia
- Aarti Parikh
- Nirmal Jyoti Parikh
- Parin Patel
- Asmita Patwardhan
- Thaddeus Pawlowski
- Surkhab Peerzada
- Horacio Pena
- Linda Pollari
- Lawrence Prager
- Shyama Puliyanda
- Devanshi Purohit
- Damu Radeshwar
- Sajid Rahm
- Sukanya Raj
- Raquel Ramati
- Jamie Rawding
- Abhishek Ray
- Joseph Rosenberg
- Anna Rubbo
- Richard Rubens
- Pattaraporn Salirathavibhaga
- Ruth Salzman
- Aaron Schneider
- Peter G Schoettle
- Sahana Sen
- Viresh Seth
- Yumiko Sheard
- Russell Shohag
- Shampa Afroz Shumu
- Subhragrit Sinha
- Ryoma Sloane
- David Smiley
- David Speedie
- Carey Spitalnick
- Dale Griffiths Stamos
- Daniel Stephens
- Elizabeth Stong
- Edward Swyer
- Manoj Tandon
- Sharon Tenen
- Ritu Thakuria
- Pavan Tripathi
- Jordan Walton
- Beth Whitaker
- Lori Wigmore
- Patricia Wischan-Rosen
Thank you to our 2021 supporters

Foundation and Corporate Support

- AmazonSmile
- Clif Family Grant
- Cofra Foundation
- Electronic Arts
- Facebook Fundraiser
- Heritage Art Auction
- Jewish Foundation
- Key Bank
- Mastercard Foundation
- Milaap Social Ventures
- Neuberger Berman Foundation
- Pepsi Company
- Princeton Area Community Foundation
- Ronin Gallery
- Spark Your Creativity
- S&P Global
- Steadview Foundation
- Sun Trust Bank
- Synapse Financial
- Vista Equity
- Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation
- Women’s Rehabilitation Group
Board of Directors

Alicia Kershaw
Anna May Feige
Dr. Eva Haller
Dr. Fumi Kato
Dr. Geeta Mehta
Kratma Saini Sood
Krishen Mehta
Dr. Kylie Schuyler
Rick Murray
Urvashi Kaul
Dr. Yoshiko Sheard
Board of Advisors

Marva Allen
Dr. Susan Blaustein
Professor M.S. Swaminathan
Chief Mentor
Beth Caton
Swati Choudhary
Amb. Aftab Seth
Dr. Kavitha Das
Dr. Dilshad Dayani
Joan Holmes
Sweta Jhunjhunwala
Dr. Gita Johar
Preeti Mattoo
Janet Montag
Dr. Masako Osako
Damyanti Radheshwar
Dr. Mayuri O. Straub
Shining Sung
Nidhi Tandon
Staff & Junior Board

Staff

Annesha Chowdhury
Program Manager

Geeta Mehta
President, Co-Founder

Surabhi Prabhu
Project Director

Gabriel Vergara
Urban Designer

Shreya Malu
Program Manager

Victoria Ramirez
Program Associate

Farra Nisha
Research Assistant

Junior Board

Devanshi Purohit
Ishita Gaur
Harish Pathak
Katherine Georgios
Pattarapor Palarathavibhaga
Lynn Bernabei
Our Second Sunday Newsletters kept our members informed of our work and events. We also held Zoom meetings with our members and local partners to speak directly with each other.
Asia Initiatives has special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations

Asia Initiatives has received the GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency

SOCIAL MEDIA

@asiainit
asia-initiatives
@asia.initiatives
/AsialInitiatives

DONATE

Check to Asia Initiatives; Pl mail to 200 East 61st Street #25AB, New York, NY, 10065
Bank Transfer: Asia Initiatives
HSBC 452 Fifth Avenue New York
NY 10018; Ac/No: 629–760039
ABA No: 021001088
On Our Website
www.asiainitiatives.org/donate

CONTACT

Info@asiainitiatives.org
+1 646 360 4459