

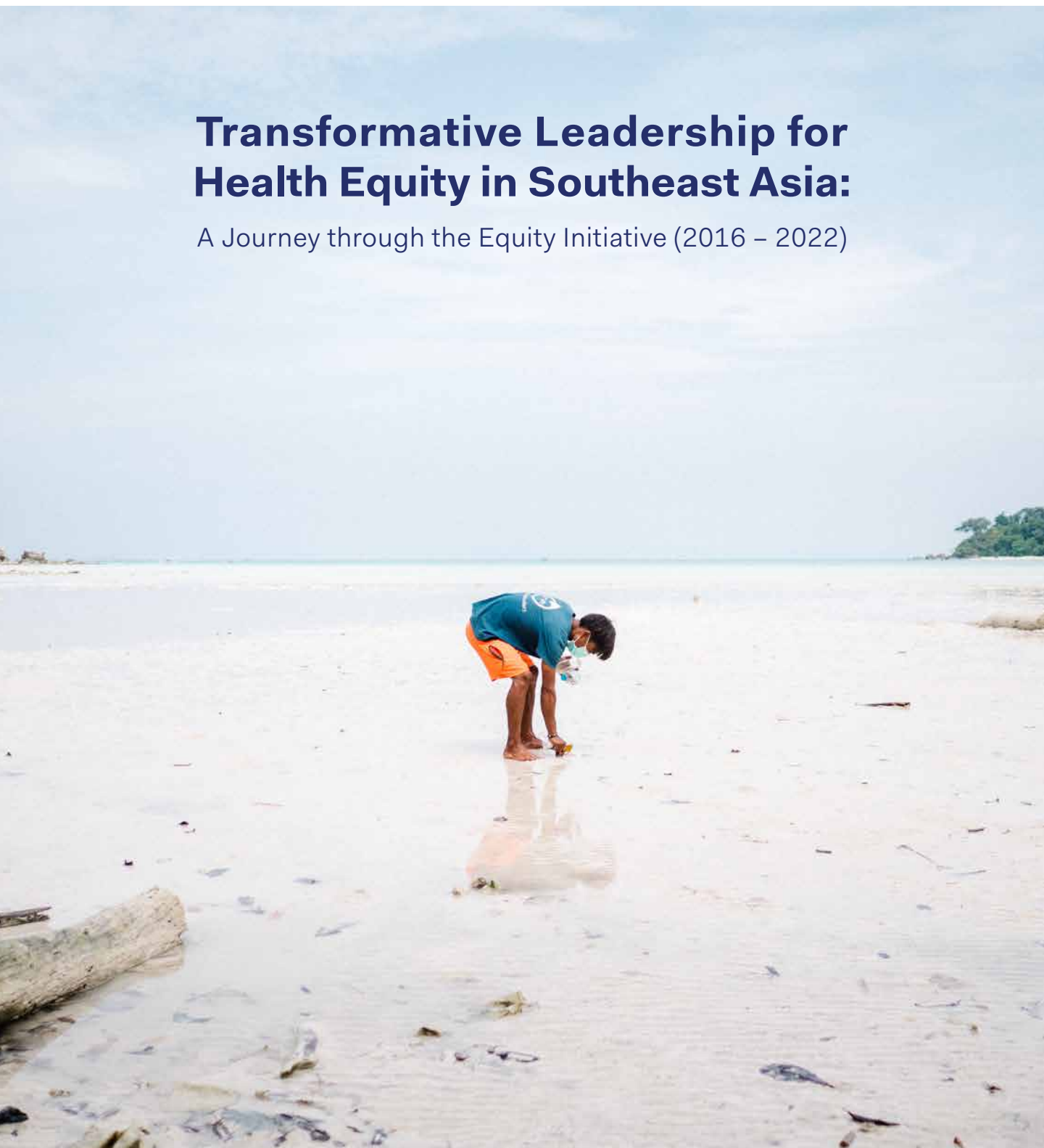



Atlantic Fellows

FOR HEALTH EQUITY
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Transformative Leadership for Health Equity in Southeast Asia:

A Journey through the Equity Initiative (2016 – 2022)





**“Equity is not a single final destination,
but a process of collectively
moving toward greater fairness.
This fellowship program aims to nurture
a generation of young leaders
and steadily build a sustained community
of change agents for health equity.”**

Lincoln Chen, President Emeritus of the China Medical Board

The Equity Initiative Utilizes Two Distinct Components to Develop Transformative Leadership for Health Equity

Fellowship Induction Year

To nurture and facilitate the development of leadership for health equity, by bringing together changemakers from different backgrounds throughout the region for a series of in-person and online learning sessions over a year-long induction period. Upon graduation from the induction year, Fellows enter into the Community Action phase.

Community Action for Health Equity

To empower Fellows and partners to take actions for system changes for health equity, through community building beyond the fellowship year, collaborative projects, in-country and regional networks and initiatives, and engagement with the Atlantic Fellows global community.

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Welcome Letter

We launched the Equity Initiative (EI) in 2016 with an ambitious long-term goal: to promote health equity in Southeast Asia and China, particularly among the most vulnerable and marginalized people. Achieving that goal, we believe, requires a network of leaders who have the knowledge, insights, and skills to advance equity principles and practices; who have the confidence and flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances; and who can draw on the support, ideas, and resources of a network of like-minded peers. EI's network is now six cohorts strong, and it is rewarding to see the bonds that have formed among our 127 Fellows as they play the roles of learner, teacher, collaborator, and friend.

We believe that introducing meaningful and lasting change requires the efforts of professionals from a wide range of fields – not only from medicine, health, and policy, but also from business, academia, media, the arts, law, advocacy, and other spheres. Our Fellows tell us they prize the diversity they find within and across cohorts. Upon completion of their induction year, they find an even wider range of perspectives and disciplines as members of the global Atlantic Fellows community, where leaders from six other programs share a commitment to fairer, healthier, and more inclusive societies. Longer term, that diversity of backgrounds, experience, and ideas can build the communities of practice that translate the goal of health equity into policies and practices that improve the lives and well-being of individuals and societies.

Through this publication, we invite you to learn more about our Fellows and the ways in which they are advocating for health equity. Their actions can be a source of inspiration for all of us who seek more equitable societies.

Phuong Nhan Le

Executive Director, The Equity Initiative



Our Vision and Purpose

Serious health inequities exist within and between countries of Southeast Asia and China. These are due to many factors, but chiefly imbalance of power; inequitable policies and laws; unequal economic conditions and opportunities; and historical and contemporary prejudices. At the Equity Initiative, we believe that the right kind of leadership can recognize these inequities and take action to improve health equity in the region, thereby contributing to a fairer, healthier, and more equitable Southeast Asia,

Our mission is to nurture a community of diverse, committed leaders to advance health equity in Southeast Asia and China. The Equity Initiative aims to empower Fellows with leadership skills, a deeper understanding of health equity, and a network of peers who can guide, direct, and influence others to bring about the fundamental change needed to attain health equity.

Our Core Values and Beliefs

- Health equity is not a single final destination, but a process of collectively moving towards greater fairness.
- Access to quality healthcare is a fundamental right of every human being. Everyone, regardless of their nationality, gender, or socioeconomic background, should have a fair opportunity to live a long, healthy, and happy life.
- Change does not take root without attending to skills, systems, and culture in concert. Social and political factors (determinants) affect health and health equity and must be taken into account.

There is no single final end point in society's struggle for social justice or health equity. Rather, health equity is a process that is guided by a notion of "fairness" in health status, outcomes, and processes. Central to the ultimate goal of this program, therefore, is the embeddedness of health equity in the society, culture, and national fabric of countries in the region. Do the leadership and public recognize and address health inequities? If so, what is being done about them? Is there progress or setbacks in various dimensions?

We build into this program this 'values-driven' fundamental wherein the partnering organizations, the governance, and operating staff are themselves committed to achieving health equity. Our goal is to cultivate lifetime commitment of the participating fellows, with support mechanisms in their home environment, and an expanding network of socially-committed and socially-bonded alumni. The fellowship aims to enable and empower rather than simply train or educate. Our aim is to provide a platform for social bonding among like-minded colleagues to give both individual and collective voices for health equity.





China Medical Board: A Mission to Advance Health, Equity, and the Quality of Care

China Medical Board (CMB) was launched in 1914 as the second major program of the Rockefeller Foundation, and was endowed in 1928 as an independent foundation. Its mission is to advance health, equity, and the quality of care in China and Southeast Asia. Working in a spirit of partnership at the forefront of strategic philanthropy, CMB strives to build capacity in an interdependent world that fosters innovation in professional education, policy research, and global health.

Throughout its history, CMB has focused on medical education reform, building human capital for health, institution building, and support for young professionals. Through its programs and grant-making, it has worked with its partners in Asia to develop the expertise, capacity, and innovative spirit to continue progress toward improved health and the quality of life. These themes all resonate with our Equity Initiative Fellows, who share a commitment to improving people's health and well-being and a willingness to invest time and energy in expanding their understanding of health equity and developing their leadership skills.

In 2010, CMB contributed to the work of the Commission on Education of Health Professionals for the 21st Century Report which described three levels of learning: informative (acquiring knowledge and skills), formative (socializing learners around values), and transformative (developing leadership attributes). The purpose of transformative learning is to produce enlightened change agents, and CMB drew on that concept as it consulted with health professionals and policymakers, as well as young leaders in a range of sectors, about designing a lifelong fellowship program. The goal of the program would be to help young professionals in Southeast Asia and China become transformative leaders who can inspire, motivate, and enhance the actions needed to bring about fundamental change for health equity.

In 2016, CMB launched the Equity Initiative, backed by a pooled fund from CMB and the Atlantic Philanthropies. Through skill-experiential and peer learning programs, this long-term fellowship program is developing 500 Asian leaders who, through individual and collaborative efforts, will advance health equity both within their countries and across the region.

The Equity Initiative Fellowship Program At A Glance



"I'm much more attuned to the ideas of justice, privilege, and power, and these concepts will probably remain the lens through which I view social issues for life. If I pursue academia, I plan to teach medical, nursing, and public health students about equity and social justice. Activism I pursue will be grounded in these fundamental concepts."

(Fellow of 2016 Cohort)

962



30



**Regional Leaders and
Experts Participate
in the Selection Process**

66



**Regional and Global Partner
Institutions and Organisation**



2016

Inaugural Year of Fellowship Program

Applications
Received

127



Fellows - 6 cohorts

12



Countries Represented by EI Fellows

15



Countries in the Region and
Globally Visited by Fellows

Empowering Leaders for Health Equity

EI's approach to leadership is goal-oriented – it is leadership in the service of improving health equity. This form of leadership is socially responsible and value-based, and focuses on collaboratively working together to bring about positive social change in our communities and the world. EI sees leadership as a process, not a position, and one that is inclusive and accessible to all people. Through this approach, any individual can serve as a leader by mobilizing others to confront a problem or challenge, define its nature and scope, and collaboratively develop interventions or solutions.

It asks change agents to look for the root causes of challenges for which there may not be easy answers. It requires relational skills that can bring stakeholders together, negotiate differences, and facilitate progress toward change.

To develop these competent, committed, and dynamic leaders, EI staff devote significant amounts of time, attention, and care at each stage of the induction year program, and they continue to nurture and empower Fellows throughout their longer-term efforts to build equity communities and advance health equity in their communities and in the region.



"I think the Fellowship has transformed me through all these field visits and meeting all these people, and I have realized that my love for my country has now been transformed into a real love for humanity. For the first time in my life I could actually see myself now working in other countries, which I couldn't before."

(Fellow of 2017 Cohort)

"The Equity Initiative fellowship has proven that health equity is not only an issue for health sector professionals but also for academia, activists, policymakers, and youth leaders, among others. The diversity of fellows allows the program to have well-rounded discussions with challenging opinions while at the same time allowing fellows to be exposed to new learning styles and tools, which will enrich their leadership skills and deepen their commitment to serving the community."

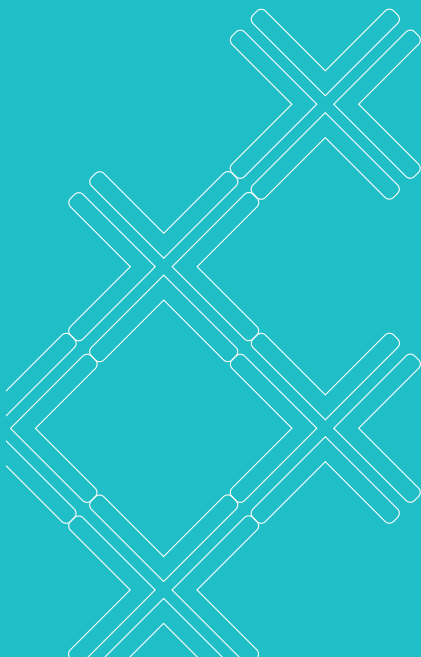
(Fellow of 2021 Cohort)

- **Recruitment** EI has built a robust recruitment process, designed to attract a diverse pool of individuals who are willing to apply their knowledge, creativity, and skills to advance health equity. We seek applicants from a wide range of sectors, including medical and health professionals, academic researchers, government officials, NGO leaders, lawyers, educators, social workers, artists, and others. Our Senior Fellows, national committees, and regional and global networks help us expand our outreach.
- **Investing in Fellows** EI invests in Fellows – in the induction year and beyond – through building up their knowledge base and skills, supporting their leadership development, providing tailored-feedback and one-on-one coaching, expanding their professional networks, and offering financial support for their equity-focused projects. The goal of these investments is to enable Fellows to work in partnership with each other and to build communities of practice in support of health equity.
- **Creating connections** EI puts a strong emphasis on social bonding, and induction year events are designed to give Fellows the time and space to form friendships and to build trust with each other. This creates an environment conducive to personal reflection, sharing, and deep learning, which in turn can lead to collaborative action and lifelong, supportive relationships. EI's Annual Forum welcomes Fellows from all cohorts as a means to build relationships across cohorts and catalyze additional opportunities for collaboration.
- **Support for Growth** We deeply care about Fellows' practice of leadership and their lifelong pursuit of the knowledge and skills they will need to develop a vision of system change, undertake effective individual action, and engage stakeholders in collective efforts. Our equity community and network help Fellows envision the routes they can take for equity action and then enhance their level of impact and influence.
- **A Global Community** The Equity Initiative fellowship program, also known as the Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity in Southeast Asia (AFHESEA), is one of seven interconnected Atlantic Fellows programs. While each of the seven programs is distinct and grounded in its local context, they share a common purpose of advancing fairer, healthier, more inclusive societies. Upon completion of their induction year, Fellows join the global Atlantic Fellows community.



"The fellowship gave me a safe space to learn how to be challenged and to accept new perspectives, which may not necessarily be aligned with my own. It provided an opportunity to practice how to truly listen and observe and to learn from differences, from humility, and from passion."

(Fellow of 2018 Cohort)



Building Equity Community

The Equity Initiative aims to build an Equity Community by engaging national, regional, and global networks of health equity champions for long term collaboration and partnership to make meaningful systems change. With EI Fellows at its core, the Equity Community strives for a single goal of fairer, healthier, and more inclusive societies.

We strongly believe that a community of Fellows from diverse backgrounds – with

shared values in social justice and equity – can achieve much greater impact than any individual or solitary group. Thus, the fellowship year is just the beginning of a lifelong journey for our Fellows. Upon completion of the fellowship induction year, Fellows are linked across cohorts and, through peer, country, and regional networks, with other professionals who are promoting health equity. Fellows are also part of the Global Atlantic Fellows community.

Our core premises for building a health equity community are:

- **Shared Values:** A community, acting on shared values, can bring greater visibility to inequities and collaborative, sustained action to overcome them.
- **Sustained Engagement:** Health equity is not a single event or an episodic issue. It is a social process that depends upon continuous and sustained engagement.
- **Local Ownership:** Health equity cannot be externally imposed, but must be owned and driven by Southeast Asian themselves.



"I know that I can always reach out to my EI fellows when I need something related to my professional life, and they will help me because we are bonded through the common goal of reducing inequities in the region. In terms of how this has added to my life, I have to say that I feel that we are an extended family now. I will miss seeing my equity family every three months!"

(Fellow of 2016 Cohort)

The Equity Initiative Induction Year

EI sees transformative learning as essential to developing leaders who will feel empowered to question, challenge, and develop new ways of thinking. Fellows' deepened understanding of health and equity, combined with competency in systems thinking, problem solving, organizing and creating change, social innovation, communication, and other areas, will enable them to turn their ideas into effective action.



"EI has given me the opportunity to step back and reflect on where I want to be, personally and professionally, in the next years. The experience has been eye-opening, inward-looking, and outward-facing process – and has given me some thought-provoking questions about what I want to do."

(Fellow of 2019 Cohort)

EI's induction year combines elements of peer, experiential, and blended online learning in its six modules:

- **Opening Retreat** This orientation introduces new Fellows to each other and to the cross-cutting values and learning modules of the program.
- **Global Learning I and II** International travel and academic sessions connect Fellows with world-class scholars and inspirational leaders, and expose them to on-the-ground health equity issues.
- **Asia Trek** Immersive learning within the Asian region gives Fellows a local lens for viewing transnational health issues.
- **Project Accelerator** Training workshops and open discussion help Fellows refine ideas for their health equity projects and strengthen leadership and management competencies.
- **Annual Forum** This event convenes Fellows from all cohorts, and inducts newly graduated Fellows into the lifelong community of the Atlantic Fellows Program

Each component is designed to help Fellows more clearly define their own core values, beliefs, and goals (**sense-making**); expose them to different ways of thinking, stakeholders, and systems (**diversity**); consider ways to remove the systemic and structural barriers to equal opportunity and access (**fairness**); and explore how power, privilege, and oppression influence structures and systems (**power dynamics**).



"Throughout the year, I've gained much insight into my motivations and biases."

The program provides a unique opportunity to reflect on why you do what you do

and how you might do it differently. It helps to move forward with that awareness of self."

(Fellow of 2016 Cohort)





*"What I loved about this retreat (**Opening Retreat**) are the wonderful connections we made with one another and how they fast-forwarded our friendship."*

(Fellow of 2017 Cohort)

*"In two weeks, I met the brightest minds in global health at Harvard and dined with social activists and equity advocates in South Africa, as well as learned about other Fellows' amazing achievements. Many ideas for projects were seeded during the **Global Learning** events."*

(Fellow of 2019 Cohort)

*"During this learning event (**Asia Trek**), the inputs from various speakers/ resource persons inspired me to proactively think about the future, and they guided me how to move forward and put into action the knowledge and lessons they provided. Travelling to different countries was an eye opener, and motivated me to do more"*

(Fellow of 2018 Cohort)

*"My realization for this week's event (**Project Accelerator**) is more on embracing humility. Despite our expertise and knowing that we had very strong and solid concepts for our projects, we still learned to bend and accept the guidance of our mentors. Our existence and our aspirations are not on what WE can do, rather what others can do for themselves through us – that for me is empowerment."*

(Fellow of 2022 Cohort)



Translating Health Equity Knowledge into Action – Fellows' Second Year Project

Over the course of the induction year, Fellows develop plans for the collaborative, small-group, equity-focused projects they will implement in their second year of the fellowship. They are supported in this process through peer feedback and coaching from experts and EI staff, from project ideation through defining the project's rationale, goals, reasoning, and timeline; writing and revising the project proposal; and group presentations at the Annual Forum.

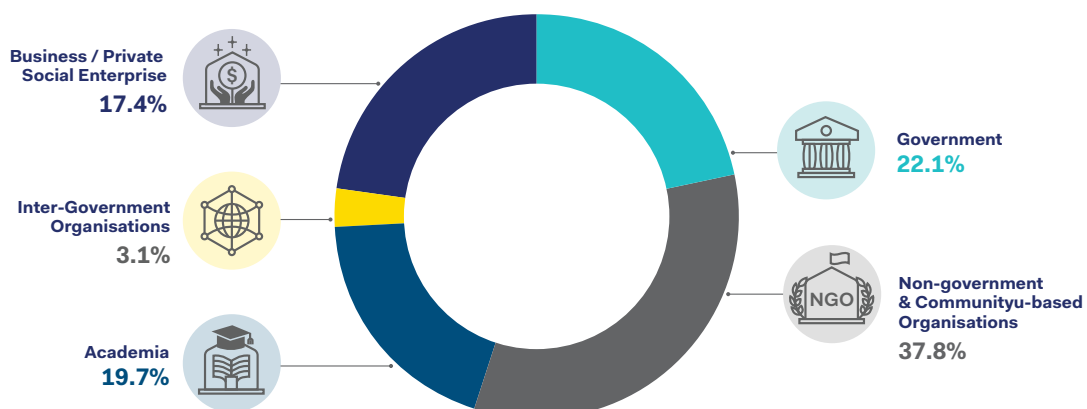
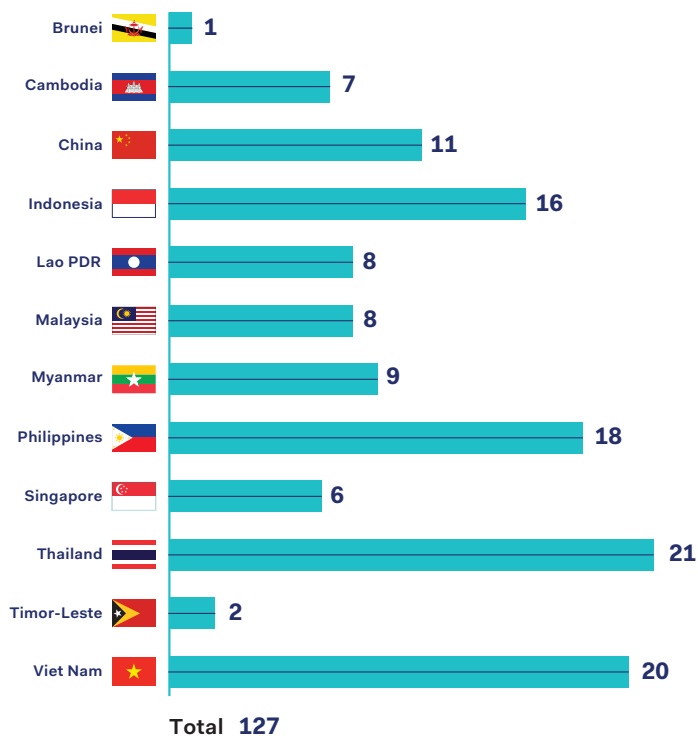
Through design and implementation of these projects, Fellows put into practice the core values of health equity and exercise newly acquired leadership skills. In the past several years, second-year projects have addressed a rich variety of topics, such as meeting the health needs of migrants and refugees; alleviating childhood stunting; community-led monitoring of pollution; using telehealth to expand access to services in remote or conflict-affected areas; and using art to increase health literacy.

“Through development and implementation of the project, we get a better understanding of equity-related issues in Viet Nam. At the same time, it helps improve our analytical skills and build our capacity in measuring and explaining inequities issues. Most importantly, the project is the opportunity to connect three of us with different professional background and expertise together, learn from each other, and expand our networks with relevant stakeholders in the field.”

(Viet Nam Fellows Group Project)



Fellows' Profile by Numbers





Strengthening the Voices of Community Members



Somporn Pengkam (Thailand, 2017), known as Nui, is a health advocate with expertise in community health impact assessment (CHIA). In 2017, she founded Community-Led Impact Institute, a nonprofit organization, to create and scale up social impact in Thailand and throughout Southeast Asia. Working at the local level, Nui trains residents to collect data, often on the impacts of pollution, and to use that data for health protection and advocacy.

Nui sees CHIA as a tool for empowering local communities, and through her EI experience, she has been able to share that tool with other advocates for health equity. For her second-year project, Nui partnered with **Channé Suy Lan** (Cambodia, 2017), a systems design specialist and managing director of InSTEDD iLab Southeast Asia. Their project focused on pollution from a coal-fired power plant in Xayabory Province in Laos, a border area adjacent to Nan Province in Thailand.

The goal was “to empower local people to collect data on the effects of the coal plant and engage with the government and the company to address the problem,” Nui explained in the project’s final report, “so the project is like a social lab, working in a small village in a remote area, using the results to create a more complete model of impacts, seed experiments in other areas, and influence policy making.”

Nui and Channé’s project succeeded in building a transdisciplinary network and in securing additional funding. Support from Thailand Science Research and Innovation enabled Nui to work with **Alay Phonvisay** (Laos, 2017), a member of the Faculty of Economic and Business Management at the National University of Laos. Alay’s research interests lie in conducting impact assessments for development projects, and the Hongsa power plant was an opportunity to examine transborder impacts, structural

inequalities, and sustainability. At the same time, Thailand's Health Systems Research Institute funding supported work on a community-led health impact monitoring system in Nan Province. This monitoring system would be based on co-production of knowledge from laypeople and experts in environmental science, engineering, social sciences, and other disciplines.

Inclusion is at the heart of health equity – ensuring that all people, including

members of marginalized communities, have a fair opportunity to be as healthy as possible. Through her projects with Channé and Alay – as well as other collaborations with **Beverly Lorraine Ho** (Philippines, 2017) and **Pianporn Deetes** (Thailand, 2021) – Nui strives to make sure that local community members can make their voices heard and contribute their insights as decisions are made that will affect their health, livelihoods, and well-being.



"I do this to empower people to do CHIA by themselves and can negotiate with policy makers by themselves," Nui says. "I would like to see equity in terms of every sector, especially the community [to] have the right to engage in the decision making and have the right to determine their future. Not a top-down policy but they have the right to have a choice [when it comes to] what kind of development they would like. Because for me, people [on the] community side are powerless in the public policy process. The powerful [ones are] from the government or the business sector."

Four Professionals with a Shared Goal



Systems change can sometimes start with small steps. Four Vietnamese Fellows, for instance, recognized that making prosthetics, orthotics, and associated rehabilitation services available to people with disabilities (PWDs) could have an outsized impact on their physical and mental health, access to education, employment, and economic opportunities.

Le Thi Nhat (2019), a project manager for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), was eager to remove a barrier to rehabilitative services: Viet Nam's state health insurance plan does not reimburse the cost of mobility-assisted devices. Nhat knew the Ministry of Health would expect to see an evidence

base for a proposed change in policy, so she turned for assistance to **Hoang Van Minh** (2016), rector of the Hanoi University of Public Health.

Minh agreed to help Nhat design her research project, which aims to identify services currently available for people with physical impairment; assess the unmet need for services; and set a cost framework for three-year and five-year packages of services. Minh also saw another gap – the lack of professionals qualified to provide rehabilitative care to people needing prosthetics and orthotics – and seized the opportunity to develop a curriculum at his university to build up the rehabilitation workforce.

At the 2022 Annual Forum, Nhat shared some of her ideas with **Nguyen Hoang Chieu Anh** (2022), a psychological counselor interested in expanding mental health services in Viet Nam. Chieu Anh recommended including psychological support services in the package of services Nhat was proposing. Chieu Anh suggested a three-tier approach of screening and assessing PWDs to determine the services needed; training 10-15 PWDs to offer peer-to-peer support; and set up a clinical practice that can offer one-to-one professional counseling.

Recognizing that macro-level advocacy will be needed to build support for policy change, Nhat has kept **Nguyen Thi Lan Anh** (2017) informed about her plans. Lan Anh has expertise in empowering PWDs through her work as the director of Action at Community Development

Center, a local NGO, and she has a broad professional network through leadership roles in the Vietnam Women's Union and the Vietnamese Federation on Disabilities. She was a strong advocate for Viet Nam to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities in 2014, as well as for the Viet Nam's ratification of the International Labor Organization Convention No. 159 on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment for PWDs, which entered into force in Viet Nam in 2020.

EI helps Fellows appreciate the benefits of advocating with others to press for systemic change. Through their collective actions, Nhat, Minh, Lan Anh, and Chieu Anh offer an illustration of collaboration across cohorts and professions in pursuit of a shared goal: to improve the lives of people living with disabilities.



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a Vi, Viet Na



Spotlighting Examples of Inequities

Raudah Yunus (Malaysia, 2019) and Gideon Lasco (Philippines, 2019) are public health professionals who are passionate about using writing to promote equity. Both were deeply moved by their visit to Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, during their Asia Trek experience, and their interactions with refugees served as a call to action.

The EI fellowship gave us a platform to connect and discuss what can be done together

to make a greater impact for this marginalized population," Raudah recalled. Gideon wrote a column on "The Rohingya conundrum" for the Philippine Daily Inquirer soon after the visit to Bangladesh, and more recently, the two co-authored a March 2021 opinion piece in The Daily Star that called for renewed attention to the plight of the Rohingya.

Raudah and Gideon also want to lift up other examples of inequities in health. When COVID-19 struck, they encouraged Fellows in their cohort to write about their experiences as "equity warriors" who were responding to COVID's impact on marginalized groups. EI published the essays from 11 Fellows in a collection titled Vignettes of Equity. Raudah and Gideon have made equity a focus in their published articles on vaccine equity and hesitancy, health workers on the political



front lines, and improving migrant workers' access to health services.

For instance, they pointed out that migrant workers often are left out of universal health coverage schemes in ASEAN countries, and they urged global health leaders to make COVID-19 vaccines more readily available to lower and middle income countries.

By spotlighting equity issues through their writing, Raudah and Gideon hope to encourage community members, young professionals, and policy makers to take action within their respective capacities. They also find benefits in the collaborative process. "You get to learn from someone who shares your ideas and values, and think in new ways about creating impact," Raudah finds. "It keeps you connected to other Fellows, even those who are not directly involved in the writing." Gideon also sees the benefits of drawing on multiple perspectives: "Co-writing enriches the text both in symbol and substance, giving the potential to be more powerful and effective."

Building Human Capital for Health Equity

Health system strengthening has been a strong focus of Cambodia's National Institute of Public Health (NIPH), and as an academic institution it directs its expertise toward improving the quality of services, translating scientific evidence into health policies, and producing public health professionals. Health equity is another piece of system strengthening, and under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, NIPH has been working to support the Cambodian government's commitment to providing quality healthcare services to the entire population according to need, without financial hardship.

"The provision of equitable health services is one of the goals set by the Ministry of Health," **Chhorvann Chhea** (2016), Director of Cambodia's National Institute of Public Health (NIPH), points out. "However, to what extent health providers, at all levels, have translated this concept into actions remains unclear. Anecdotal evidence suggests that applying the concept of 'health equity' among health care managers is limited, as managers at public health facilities do not assess whether their services have reached the target population, especially the most vulnerable groups."

Chhorvann focused his EI second-year project on students, faculty, health care managers, and researchers – the human capital needed to build health equity. He organized four workshops at NIPH. Two workshops were for faculty and students at NIPH, on equity and on social inequality in health, and one was for health center managers as part of the Management and

Leadership Program or Health Managers in Cambodia. He also convened a workshop on equity analysis for young researchers at NIPH, in an effort to encourage them to generate equity-related questions and use existing datasets for equity analysis.

Managers of health facilities remain a key target group for improving health equity. Since 2019, NIPH has added more focus on the provision of management and leadership training to managers of health facilities at sub-national level so that they could provide more equitable healthcare services. NIPH also has formed a network among health facility managers to enhance



knowledge and share experience related to integrating health equity into the healthcare system.

"Time is a determinant," Chhorvann said in a recent presentation to 2022 EI Fellows, "and the challenge is knowing what to do and when to do it." Investing in human resources now – through training and networking of healthcare managers, integrating health equity concepts into public health curricula, encouraging equity-focused research, and other steps – can ensure that as new policies take shape, there will be qualified professionals ready to turn health equity goals into effective practice.

Networking in Thailand

EI now has 21 Fellows from Thailand, with professional interests as diverse as health systems, environmental advocacy, LGBTQ rights, landscape architecture, health technology, care for the elderly, and more. But for EI's first two cohorts (2016 and 2017), there were only six Thai Fellows in total, which could have made it challenging to create the sense of an active community for health equity in Thailand. "For EI to facilitate change at a country level, we need to work with a broader network," EI Program Director **Piya Hanvoravongchai** said. In 2017, he and members of EI's Thai National Committee helped connect the Thai Fellows with two other groups in Thailand – Ashoka Thailand and the Thai Health Leadership Network.

Like EI, Ashoka and the Thai Health Leadership Network share interests in social justice, health, and equity: Ashoka through its support of dynamic social entrepreneurs and the Thai Health Leadership Network through capacity building of medical and health professionals, NGO workers, social scientists, and others. And their fellows shared something else with EI Fellows. "They felt that there was not a platform or space for people to really connect and share in this area of social change," Piya noted, "and they felt that it was important to do that." Informal "tea drinking" get-togethers were occasions to share information about each other's work, and participants in the three programs planned a three-day Social Equity Impact Forum, held in July 2019.

Linking with other programs also helped EI to elevate its brand. "We were new and not that many people knew who we were," Piya recalled. "Connecting with Ashoka, which



"..has a network across different organizations, helped EI's name to become known among these actors"

That helped us recruit many well-qualified applicants from Thailand.

has 100-plus change leaders in Thailand and with the Thai Health Leadership Network, which has a network across different organizations, helped EI's name to become known among these actors. That helped us recruit many well-qualified applicants from Thailand."

The pandemic sidelined plans for another forum or other gatherings, and fresh thinking may be needed to consider when and how participants in these three programs might regroup. But a lesson learned is that there are other groups who share EI's values and who can be allies in making progress toward health equity.

"We want to catalyze collective effort," Piya said about EI and its outlook for the future, "and we want to keep momentum going." By connecting with other networks of changemakers, EI can help its Fellows add strength to their ideas and initiatives and multiply the benefits they deliver to the communities they serve.

– Taking Many Paths to Health Equity –

Common Purpose in a Community of Practice



“We began by establishing working committees to identify where the gaps were in mental health support”

says Senior Fellow, **Abelardo Apollo David, Jr.** (2018), also known as Archie.



El Fellows in the Philippines are a diverse group of professionals, with expertise in health policy, municipal governance, reproductive health, law, journalism, and more. In 2020 they were eager to find ways to connect across cohorts and with their Filipino peers among the Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity US + Global. During the group's first virtual discussion, held in August 2020, they decided to ground their connection in collaborative action on an equity issue. They would focus on the prevalence of suicide among youth in the Philippines and look for ways to expand mental health services for young Filipinos, particularly those in remote areas. "We then had to build a coalition of stakeholders across different levels of government, civil society, NGOs and private organisations. And we needed a strategy that would make a big impact via local government" Archie recalls. Engaging so many stakeholders – including representatives of the Philippine Psychiatric Association, Philippine Association of Social Workers, Inc., Philippine Society for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Department of Education, Department of Health, and others – was the most daunting task facing the Filipino Fellows. Decision makers were preoccupied with the immediate fallout from pandemic, yet the rise in youth suicide was an urgent concern that demanded their attention. In these challenging circumstances, the Fellows had to deploy their people skills, honed during the fellowship program and through the team's own bonding activities.

The most successful approach, Fellows thought, would be to leverage their collective networks and engage people via the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP), an organisation that represents 68 municipalities across the country. It took a few months to build the coalition of stakeholders, but the strategy worked. Ironically, the pandemic made it easier to get people together online, as it was now the preferred medium for interaction.

The LMP passed a resolution in February 2021, which called on municipalities to train first responders, a range of professionals, and volunteers to identify warning signs; to provide counseling services; to support those bereaved by suicide; and to maintain up-to-date demographic statistics. Local governments now have the legal muscle to implement those actions. It will take time to see real world results, but Fellows hope to see a dramatic downturn in suicide attempts.

Alfredo Matugan Coro (2019), also known as JR, Vice Mayor of the Municipality of Del Carmen, believes the resolution has succeeded in changing attitudes and creating momentum. "The LMP resolution served as a wake-up call to municipalities to seriously look into mental health issues and youth suicides as a mental health concern versus previous perceptions of that youth suicide are isolated cases only," he said. "By recognizing the problem and accountability of the local government, some of the affected local governments – those with reported youth suicides – were able to immediately take action to address the possible spread of youth suicide as an option out of the pressures that youth were experiencing during the pandemic."

Building a Community of Practice in Indonesia

One goal of the Equity Initiative is that Fellows will create platforms within their own countries that bring together like-minded professionals who work, in a variety of ways, on advancing health equity. In Indonesia, Fellows felt that a first step in the process of building a community of practice was to create a virtual space where professionals from a range of sectors could share information and expertise and bring greater attention to equity issues.

In October 2019, the Indonesian Fellows launched a monthly webinar series with the support of a small EI community building grant. The first five webinars focused on topics such as universal health coverage, social determinants of health, and digital technology for health. The sense of a broad community with shared interests in health equity was evident among the webinar participants, who represented schools of medicine and public health, hospitals and primary care facilities, health and policy research centers, district health offices, NGOs, and other organizations.

When COVID struck in 2020, the webinars became a resource for assessing the pandemic's impact on vulnerable groups. Speakers addressed the challenge of coordinating adolescent nutrition programs during the pandemic, disruptions in education and health services for special needs children, the impact of closing facilities that screened for childhood stunting and wasting, social justice in vaccine distribution, and other issues.

The webinar organizers had already begun to post a curated collection of articles online – one per week – on topics related to health equity, and during the pandemic, these articles also looked at maintaining reproductive health services during the pandemic, the mental health needs of healthcare workers, the welfare of the elderly, and other challenges.

The webinars confirmed the Fellows' idea that the time was right for a community of practice to form: attendance at each session ranged from 40 to 150 people. "The webinar series helped introduce topics related to health equity for the Indonesian context," **Elisabeth Listyani** (2019) said, "and increased the awareness of academics, public health professionals, and other relevant communities to advocate for health equity." It also demonstrated a desire to learn, discuss, question, introduce change, and collaborate – qualities that can help build a solid foundation for a more equitable future.





Beating the Drum for Health Equity

The experience of **Jeremy Lim** (2016, Singapore) highlights some of the diverse ways that Fellows contribute their expertise and networks to raise the profile of health equity.

“Since 2016, I have been organizing my life in a portfolio, with roles in entrepreneurship, academia, and not-for-profit activities. Through these roles, I’ve had the privilege to be able to contribute in small ways towards health equity. For instance, through my board role in HealthServe, the migrant worker health-care charity, my colleagues and I have highlighted issues workers face in accessing healthcare and worked with policy makers to effect system-level changes”

For the first time, Singapore has a national primary healthcare system dedicated to migrant workers and this has been transformative in enabling access to quality healthcare for the workers right at their doorsteps. What has been so important is the mindset change and the awakening of the hearts of the Singapore public towards this traditionally neglected community. The government has stepped up strongly to organize these services, and now my HealthServe colleagues and I are refocusing our efforts towards dental care and mental health services.

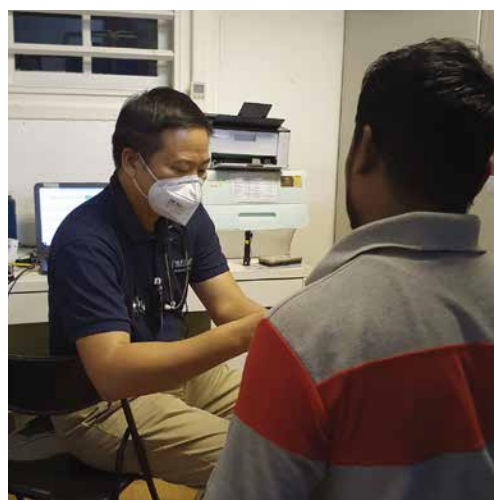
“With governments appreciating that in health ‘no one is safe until everyone is safe,’ and the wide acceptance of technologies such as telemedicine, there is commercial opportunity for the first time ever in Asia for population health and primary healthcare. When I speak to fellow entrepreneurs, there is tangible

excitement about harnessing technology and new models of care to provide quality healthcare to the most economically deprived communities. Through speaking engagements and writing, I hope to ‘infect’ even more of my peers to focus on health equity and on the ‘bottom of the pyramid’.

“The biggest impact EI Fellows and I have been able to make, in my opinion, has been in

Continuously beating the drum for health equity

and in asking, in everything we do, about the consequences on health equity. Hopefully, through our personal examples and deliberate mentoring and support of younger colleagues, we also help to ignite the flame for others.”



Our Fellows in Action

Fellows Received



81

Awards or Recognitions

Fellows Completed

79

Equity Projects

with Support of the Program
and Other Sources



3,043,141



US\$

Awarded to Fellows for Equity
Community Building and
Implementing Equity Projects



687

Publications (Books, Book Chapters,
Journal Articles, Columns, Opinions)
Produced by Fellows

212



Presentations, Webinars, Talks, Panel Discussions
on Equity-Related Topics Delivered by Fellows

Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity in Southeast Asia at the Equity Initiative: A Connected Community for A Better World





2016 FELLOWS



Chhorvann Chhea

Director, National Institute of Public Health, Ministry of Health Cambodia

Advancing health equity through equity-centered skill development and evidence-driven practices with healthcare managers and health practitioners.



Chenhui Liu

CEO, FamilyDoc Medical Mechnology Co. Ltd. China

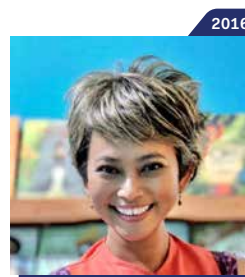
Introducing primary healthcare physicians to digital solutions that enhance health equity



Zhanjie Si

Director, Aizhen China

Promoting community-based intervention programs for people affected by leprosy.



Nila Tanzil

Founder and CEO of Taman Bacaan Pelangi Indonesia

Promoting literacy among children in remote areas to help achieve the goal of universal education.



Soulivanh Pholsena

Chief physician, Lao Medical Care Center. Lao PDR

Involving private sector in providing primary care to harness the efforts of achieving UHC.



Nicola Pocock

Assistant Professor, Child Exploitation and Health, LSHTM UK

Expanding the base of evidence on child labour and migration to better protect the rights of vulnerable children.



Tim Aye-Hardy

Co-founder and executive director, myME: Mobile Education Project. Myanmar

Creating opportunities for underserved students through mobile classrooms and addressing inclusivity in education.



Jeremy Lim

Director, the Leadership Institute for Global Health Transformation, NUS Singapore

Strengthening cooperation, capacity building and knowledge sharing among regional public health professionals.

2016 FELLOWS



Chalernsak Kittitrakul

Coordinator for Access to Medicines Campaign, AIDS Access Thailand

Reinforcing drug policies to make HIV and HCV medicine more affordable to all.



Natalie Phaholyothin

CEO, World Wildlife Fund Thailand

Working to protect biodiversity, combat illegal wildlife trade, and reduce plastics pollution.



Jiruth Sriratanaban

Director, Research Center for Health Service Systems, Chulalongkorn University Thailand

Leveraging health sector financing and quality management to reduce disparities and advance equity.



Pham Kieu Oanh

Founder/CEO, Center for Social Initiatives Promotion Viet Nam

Building the capacity of young social entrepreneurs to influence their environment and become role models for their communities.



Hoang Van Minh

Rector, Hanoi University of Public Health Viet Nam

Gathering evidence and identifying programmatic and systems facilitators and barriers to advancing health equity.



Nguyen Thu Ha

Morning News Producer, Viet Nam National Television Viet Nam

Bringing more public attention to social issues through her news coverage.



Phan Thi Thuy Tram

Deputy Director, Communication Department, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Viet Nam

Engaging ministerial leadership to design policies and take action that improve the well-being of all.

2017 FELLOWS

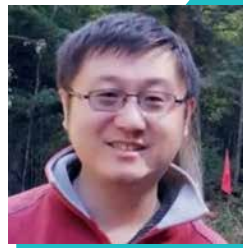


2017

Channé Suy Lan

Regional lead, InSTEDD
iLab Southeast Asia
Cambodia

Designing digital solutions to help people elevate their dignity and create greater performance and wellbeing.



2017

Nan Shi

Lecturer, Peking
University First
Hospital, Peking
University
China

Promoting healthy eating, healthy behaviors, and drug safety.



2017

Rui Deng

Associate professor,
School of Public
Health, Kunming
Medical University
China

Conducting research on health disparities and the determinants that adversely affect ethnic minority women and girls.



2017

Satiriantinah Bur Rasuanto

Co-founder and chief
commercial officer,
VIDA Digital Identity
Indonesia

Using digital technology to enhance financial inclusion and sustainable growth of social entrepreneurs.



2017

Alay Phonvisay

Lecturer, Faculty of
Economic and Business
Management, National
University
Lao PDR

Conducting research to inform policy about trade-related constraints that negatively impact poor communities.



2017

Tharani Loganathan

Lecturer, Faculty of
Medicine, University of
Malaysia
Malaysia

Focusing on achieving universal health coverage and providing financial risk protection to households.



2017

Pan Myat Mon

Country Program
Manager, Australian
Volunteers
Myanmar

Facilitating sustainable social and development change in Myanmar.



2017

Wai Wai Han

Public Health
Researcher
Myanmar

Enhancing the health policy and interventions through research on vulnerable population.

2017 FELLOWS



Benjamin Lawrence Aritao

Director of Prosecution Department, International Justice Mission Philippines

Strengthening a network of law professionals, key gatekeepers, and community support for survivors of human trafficking.



Beverly Lorraine Ho

Director, Health Promotion and Communications Service, Department of Health, Philippines

Working toward systematic changes through improved health promotion and communication policies and laws.



Ariel Caringal Hernandez

School Director, Global Mindanao Polytechnic Philippines

Working to combat rural poverty and to promote equity-based development and sustainable peace.



Lynna Chandra

Founder, Rachel House Children's Hospice Indonesia

Creating community-based solution for palliative care for children.



Kanapon Phumratprapin

Founder and CEO, Health at Home Thailand

Using health technology to address the gap in geriatric treatment and care.



Somporn Pengkam

Founder and Director, Community Health Impact Assessment Platform Thailand

Leading efforts to empower communities facing inequities and to incorporate their insights into policy reform.



Santi Lapbenjakul

Director, Lamsonthi Hospital Thailand

Reinforcing national policy and infrastructure to provide affordable and quality primary healthcare services to rural population.



Nguyen Thi Lan Anh

Founder and Director, Action to the Community Development Center Viet Nam

Advocating for social inclusion and ensuring the legal rights and economic opportunities of people with disabilities.

2018 FELLOWS

2017



Do Thuy Duong

Founder and CEO,
TalentPool
Viet Nam

Designing and implementing leadership development programs to help unlock the full potential of individuals.

2018



Koung Lo

Director, Preah Vihear
Provincial Health
Department
Cambodia

Working to improve access to primary healthcare services in rural areas, especially for high-risk pregnant women.

2018



Fan Jiang

Vice chancellor,
School of Medicine,
Shanghai Jiao Tong
University
China

Focusing on improving health equity in early childhood through research, policy improvement, and initiating interventions.

2018



Jin Xu

Lecturer, Center for
Health Development
Studies, Peking
China

Working to bring greater recognition to the importance and feasibility of reducing health inequities in China and globally.

2017



Luong The Huy

Director, iSEE Institute
Viet Nam

Advocating for LGBTQTI rights through raising public awareness, legal reforms, and behavioral change initiatives.

2018



Sophia Benedicta Hage

Clinic manager and
founding member,
Medifit Clinic
Indonesia

Focusing on issues of sexual and genderbased violence and promoting healthy lifestyles.

2018



Elisabeth Listyani

Researcher, Center for
Health and Policy
Management,
University Gadjah
Mada, Indonesia

Conducting evaluation research to address the inequitable distributions of health resources and services in remote areas.

2018



Tiara Marthias

Lecturer, Public Health
Department, Faculty of
Medicine, University
Gadjah Mada
Indonesia

Working to ensure equitable access to quality reproductive, maternal, neonatal, and child health in rural and remote areas.

2018 FELLOWS



Nur Khaulah Fadzil

Humanitarian Affairs
Adviser, International
Committee of the Red
Cross, Malaysia

Working with influential
leaders and organisa-
tions to ensure that
refugees receive the
protection to which they
are entitled.



Han Win Htat

Executive Director,
Sun Community
Health
Myanmar

Tackling health
inequities through
the purchase of an
essential primary
health care package
and quality services
improvement.



Bawi Mang Lian

Medical Officer,
Ministry of Health and
Sports
Myanmar

Promoting equity
in health resource
allocation and making
telemedicine accessible
for tertiary and second-
ary care in rural areas.



**Abelardo Apollo
David Jr.**

Founder, Independent
Living Learning Centre
Philippines

Putting interconnected
systems in place that
allow children and
youth with special
needs to live
independent and
purposeful lives.



**Abdel Jamal
Disangcopan**

Attorney for
Bangsamoro on Human
Rights, Public Health,
and Legal Reform
Philippines

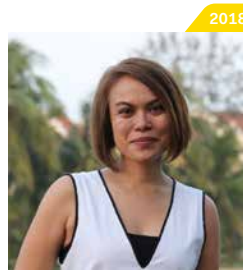
Applying a rights-based
approach to institutional
capacity building and
advance change in rules,
regulations and policies.



**Noraida Abdullah
Karim**

Mindanao Program
Director, Community
and Family Services
International
Philippines

Working to rebuild
lives by addressing the
root causes of conflict
and improving
community resilience.



Ana Santos

Journalist
Philippines

Bringing attention to
sexual and reproductive
health to influence policy
and promote discussion
about taboo subjects.



Sharon Low

Co-Founder and
Managing Partner, The
Knowledge House
Singapore

Promoting equity in
fragile, conflict affected
states through capacity
building and reducing
barriers to services for
marginalized groups.

2018 FELLOWS



**Borwornsom
Leerapan**

Health Systems
Researcher and Faculty
member, Mahidol
University, Thailand

Encouraging policy makers and health practitioners to use systems thinking to develop sustainable solutions to complex issues.



May Sripatanaskul

Founder and CEO,
LUKKID/Asian
Leadership Academy
Thailand

Developing human centered work processes that allow people to tackle social challenges through intersectional solutions.



Pairoj Saonuum

Assistant Chief
executive officer, Thai
Health Promotion
Thailand

Working to reinforce programs, policies, and practices that promote healthy lifestyles and prevent chronic disease.



**Kotchakorn
Voraakhom**

Founder and CEO,
Porous City Network
Thailand

Using landscape architecture and public park design to tackle climate change and increase urban resilience.



**Carmeneza Dos
Santos Monteiro**

Strategic Policy Adviser,
Ministry of Social
Solidarity and Inclusion
Timor-Leste

Improving the utilization of public resources to deliver more equitable social services and enhance protection for vulnerable populations.



Hoang Tu Anh

Co-Founder and Vice
Director, Center for
Creative Initiatives in
Health and Population
Viet Nam

Working to empower vulnerable and disadvantaged communities and enhance state's accountability.



Nguyen Thi Thai Lan

Lecturer, University of
Social Sciences and
Humanities, National
University, Viet Nam

Working to strengthen the social work profession and promote an equity mindset in social work education and practices.



Bui Thi Thuy

Head of the Nursing
Department, National
Children's Hospital
Viet Nam

Creating a collaborative network of nurses and positioning nurses as health changemakers in hospital and in the community.

2019 FELLOWS

2018



Nguyen Tran Nguyen

Official, Office of
People's Committee of
Dong Thap Province
Viet Nam

Working to expand health insurance coverage and health service provision, with a focus on the growing elderly population.

2019



Sean Sok Phay

Executive Director,
Child Helpline
Cambodia

Developing a helpline platform for sexually exploited children and advocating for improved law enforcement response to child abuse.

2019



Xiao Long

Professor and deputy
director, Peking Union
Medical College
Hospital
China

Working to identify facilitators who can integrate health equity work into the clinical practice setting.

2019



Kun Zhang

President, Evercare
Health Group
China

Promoting a digital service and an online network to share information on peoplecentered integrative care among health professionals.

2019



Sam Oeun

Managing Director,
Buddhism for Health
Cambodia

Introducing a self sustaining community mechanism to improve access to health equity funds for the poor.

2019



Yunting Zhang

Associate Professor,
Shanghai Children's
Medical Center
China

Developing an early child development monitoring system that will identify risks leading to persistent inequities and develop interventions.

2019



Goris Mustaqim

Founder and CEO,
Semur Nusantara
Consulting
Indonesia

Applying digital technology through social innovations to tackle maternal mortality and reducing child malnutrition in rural and remote areas.

2019



Rennta Chrisdiana

Commissioner,
Yogyakarta Hospital
Supervisory Board
Indonesia

Empowering patients' access to quality health services through partnership building and facilitating conversation about patient satisfaction.

2019 FELLOWS



Blandina Rosalina Bait

Nutrition Officer,
UNICEF
Indonesia

Developing a stronger evidence base to guide programming to address severe malnutrition.



Vannaphone Sitthirath

Film Producer and
Cofounder of Lao New
Wave Cinema
Production
Lao PDR

Using documentary film and storytelling to explore complex issues and promote social change.



Phetdavanh Leuangvilay

Technical Officer,
Health Emergency
Programme, WHO
Lao PDR

Working to ensure equal access to resources and services that will enable mitigation and recovery from disasters and public health emergencies.



Letchimi Devi Doraisamy

Senior Project Officer
MY Voice, Letchimi
Devi works with The
Centre for Child Rights
and Business, Malaysia

Coordinating and implementing project activities on the ground to tackle child labour issues and protect the rights of domestic workers in Malaysia.



Raudah Mohd Yunus

Lecturer, Faculty of
Medicine, University
Technology MARA
Malaysia

Conducting research on disparities in health of vulnerable population and advocating for more effective policy interventions.



Gideon Cauton

Director, National Law
Enforcement
Development,
International Justice
Mission, Philippines

Building the capacity of law enforcement and the justice system to combat sexual exploitation.



Alfredo Matugas Coro

Vice Mayor,
Municipality of Del
Carmen, Siargao
Islands, Philippines

Integrating social determinants related to education, climate change, income, and social protection into local policymaking.



Gideon Lasco

Writer and Senior
Lecturer, Department
of Anthropology, UP
Diliman, Philippines

Using a social justice lens to spotlight inequities and call for collective actions to build a better society.

2019 FELLOWS



Natarajan Rajaraman

Executive Director,
Muluk Timor
Singapore

Providing low-cost primary care services to migrant workers and working to strengthen the health systems in limited resource setting.



Kritaya Sreesunpagit

Consultant, Vajira
Hospital
Thailand

Creating networks of support for health care professionals to remove obstacles that prevent them from reaching their full potential.



Rapeepong Suphanchaimat

Director, International
Health Policy Program,
Ministry of Public
Health, Thailand

Conducting health policy research to identify policy solutions and contribute to the policy reform process.



Ratawit Ouaprachanon

Educator, Institute of
Human Rights and
Peace Studies, Mahidol
University, Thailand

Educating and conducting research to promote peace, reconciliation and conflict transformation.



Panusart Poonkasetwattana

Executive director,
APCOM Foundation
Thailand

Advancing the health, rights, and well-being of people of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.



Le Thi Nhat

Country Project
Manager, International
Committee of the Red
Cross, Viet Nam

Aiming to ensure access to quality and affordable physical rehabilitation services for people with disabilities.



Nguyen Quoc Thanh

Artist, curator and
founding director,
Queer Forever!
Viet Nam

Using a participatory process to explore issues of queer aesthetics and activism through art, film, and exhibitions.



Phan Thi Ngoc Linh

Co-founder and CEO,
Center for Health
Innovation Research
Viet Nam

Establishing a network to connect innovators and health service providers and promote innovation in quality improvement.

2021 FELLOWS



Noor Affizan Rahman

Deputy Medical Superintendent, PMMPPMHAMB Hospital, Tutong Brunei

Integrating equity work into hospital governance and structures and improving the quality of care to achieve better health outcomes.



Angga Dwi Martha

Programme Management Officer, UN Youth Strategy Indonesia

Facilitating implementation of the UN Youth Strategy through leveraging a network of young leaders committed to equity and justice.



Fransiska F. Sugi

Researcher and the founder of Yayasan Sejuta Harapan (Hands of Hope) Indonesia

Working to mitigate the effects of climate change on the poor and marginalized communities in East Nusa Tenggara province.



Alfrison Paloga

Epidemiologist, Port Health Office of Jayapura Indonesia

Addressing crossborder health challenges and enhancing the effectiveness of infectious disease prevention.



Phetdavanh Sipaseuth

Specialist in Land Tenure Rights and Natural Resources Management Lao PDR

Building the capacity and strengthening the roles of civil society organisations in environmental and community land-rights issues.



Viengnakhone Vongxay

Public Health Lecturer, Faculty of Public Health, University of Health Sciences, Lao PDR

Supporting adolescent sexual and reproductive health rights through research and promoting healthseeking behaviors in adolescents.



Sok Teng Tan

Researcher, PhD Candidate Malaysia

Conducting research on the social injustice and the effects of social capital on the wellness of Rohingya refugees.



Renard Siew

Advisor, Center for Governance and Political Studies Malaysia

Responding to climate change and sustainable development needs through advocacy, networking, awareness raising, and social entrepreneurship.

2021 FELLOWS



Celyn Celyn

Senior Program Manager, Civil Health and Development Network, Myanmar

Designing community-based interventions to improve vulnerable women and children's access to health services in hard-to reach areas.



Amina Evangelista Swanepoel

Executive Director, Roots of Health Philippines

Empowering women and girls to make informed decisions and advocating for sexual and reproductive health and rights.



Jason John Joyce

Municipal Mayor, Jose Abad Santos, Davao Occidental Philippines

Developing a legislative and regulatory to strengthen accountability for equity within government and across sectors.



Leslie Ann Luces

Provincial Health Officer, Aklan Province Department of Health Philippines

Developing a patient-centered care model aimed at improving health system performance and achieving better health outcomes.



Sherjan Pangato Kalim

Pathologist and Head of Blood Bank, Cotabato Medical Center, Mindanao, Philippines

Advocating for Ibadah-friendly health facilities and the reform of health education through inclusion of Islamic teachings and community leadership.



Joanne Ngeow

Associate Professor, Senior Medical Consultant, National Cancer Centre Singapore

Working to integrate genomics into routine healthcare to reduce the burden of chronic diseases.



Sornchai Chatwiriychai

Founder and Artistic Director of "Malongdu Theatre" Thailand

Pioneering the practices of "Theatre of the Oppressed" to build the capacity of social justice changemakers.



Pianporn Deetes

Director, Thailand and Myanmar Campaigns, International Rivers Thailand

Raising awareness of the negative impacts of dams on ethnic communities and advocating for better planning of water and energy supply projects.

2022 FELLOWS



Thorn Pitidol

Assistant Professor,
Faculty of Economics,
Thammasat University
Thailand

Applying a social and political economy framework and promoting community awareness to address social development challenges.



Sara Maria Pereira

Adviser, National
Disability Inclusive
Development, GfD
Cardno
Timor – Leste

Supporting disability and development stakeholders through capacity building and informed evidencebased interventions.



Sreypeov Tun

Head of Faculty Nursing
and Midwife, University
of Puthisastra
Cambodia

Reforming nursing education to enable nurses to bridge the delivery of health care and meeting the social needs of the community.



Say Sivutha

Social Protection
Specialist, the General
Secretariat for the
National Social
Protection Council,
Cambodia

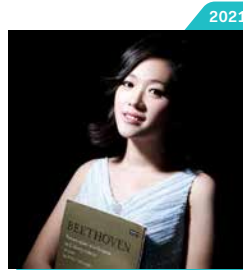
Addressing inequities caused by lack of income and poverty through policy responses, social security measures, and other means.



Le Khac Bao

Vice Director, Medical
Education Center, the
University of Medicine
and Pharmacy
Viet Nam

Supporting medical education reform by introducing innovative ideas into curriculum development.



Trang Trinh

Concert Pianist, Music
Educator, and Founder
of Wonder
Viet Nam

Enabling others to experience the wonder and transformative power of art and music.



Dong Dong

Assistant Professor,
The Chinese University
of Hong Kong
China

Conducting research and designing interventions to increase the quality of life of patients with rare diseases.



Haibin Zhou

Secretary General and
CEO, ILO Global
Business and Disability
Network
China

Working to fight for the rights of people with disabilities, creating a legally mandated demand for employment and workers' support.

2022 FELLOWS



Benny Prawira

Founder of Into The Light Indonesia
Indonesia

Working with communities on suicide prevention and improving mental health services.



Putri Saraswati

Public Health Professional and Researcher
Indonesia

Focusing on sexual and reproductive health rights and gender equity in health and calling for renewal actions in health of women and girls.



Egi Wahid

Program Director, the Centre for Indonesia's Strategic Development Initiatives, Indonesia

Strengthening health systems through improving human resources, community involvement, and a mechanism to hold government accountable.



Rosadalima Panda

Core Team Member of WISE WASH Southeast Asia
Indonesia

Strengthening the power of communities and building solidarity across borders to create change.



Anan Bouapha

Founder and President of Proud To Be Us Laos
Lao PDR

Advocating for equal provision of sexual healthcare services and removing stigma and discrimination that LGBTQI communities face.



Chandavieng Phimmavong

Academic Staff, Faculty of Public Health, University of Health Science
Lao PDR

Promoting sexual and reproductive health among adolescents through peer-to-peer education, counseling, and youth-friendly services.



Collins Santhanasamy

Founder, M Exchange
Malaysia

Empowering communities through the development of innovative healthcare solutions that contribute to community resilience.



Naw Mhote (Tee Tar)

Deputy Director of the Burma Medical Association
Myanmar

Improving the health status of communities in neglected areas through building partnerships, research, raising awareness, and advocacy.

2022 FELLOWS



Nay Lin Tun

Humanitarian Medical Worker
Myanmar

Using mobile community-based healthcare to deliver care to internally displaced persons in conflict-affected areas.



Eaint Thiri Thu

Freelance Journalist;
Documentary Producer
Myanmar

Using storytelling and accurate information to help society understand the reality of social challenges.



Yves Miel Zuniga

Co-founder and Deputy Director,
MentalHealthPH
Philippines

Promoting the use of digital interventions for mental health and wellbeing through a youth-led social network.



Shairra Alyssa Bello

Co-founder and Partner at AHA
Philippines

Applying behavioral science to promote healthier and more productive behaviors.



Jose Augustus Villano

Planning Officer, the Commission on Population and Development for Region IX, Philippines

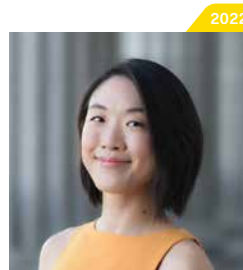
Identifying populations at risk for health disparities and providing guidance on how better resource allocation can address those disparities.



Noel Landicho Bernardo

Humanitarian Physician. Public Health Practitioner
Philippines

Establishing an emergency preparedness and response plan and improving disaster resilience by using technology to deliver health services.



Chi Ling Chan

Deputy Director, Open Government Products, GovTech
Singapore

Developing health tech products that empower patients to take greater ownership of their health.



Clive Tan

Director, Integrated Care (Population Health), National Healthcare Group
Singapore

Facilitating system level improvements with the goal of transforming healthcare delivery in an organization serving close to two million people.

2022 FELLOWS



Ada Chirapaisarnkul

CEO of TaejaiDotcom
Thailand

Developing better solutions to wicked social problems and making health and social services more accessible to the least privileged populations.



Ittinat Seeboonruang

National Consultant,
The German Sparkassenstiftung
Thailand

Creating collaborative spaces within conversation to enable the involved actors and sectors to voice their perspectives.



Bampen Chaiyarak

Research Coordinator,
the Eco-Culture Study
Group
Thailand

Building a greater equity in decision making by strengthening community's participation in the process of socioecological restoration.



Alisa Hasamoh

Lecturer, Head of the
Social Development
Department, Prince of
Songkla University
Thailand

Promoting integrated approaches and evidence-based programs that respond to inequities that ethnic minority populations experience.



Pham Ngoc Bich

Deputy Director, Viet
Lien Organics
Agriculture Joint Stock
Viet Nam

Leveraging the knowledge, participation, and collaboration of community members to introduce new approaches to organic farming.



Le Quang Tram Tinh

Senior Program
Manager, The Fred
Hollows Foundation
Viet Nam

Transforming eye care delivery systems by leveraging existing resource, building local capacities, and developing tools to increase efficiencies.



Nguyen Hoang Chieu Anh

Psychological
Counselor
Viet Nam

Promoting early intervention and empowering individuals to be proactive with respect to their mental health.



Tran Quynh Trang

Project Officer, The
International Center-
Viet Nam Veterans of
America Foundation
Viet Nam

Building a better understanding of the importance of disability-inclusive health systems and policies.

List of Sponsored Projects

(*) Fellows' Second Year Projects

(**) The Equity Community Building Grants

Raising Awareness on Health Equity Among Public Health Professionals in Cambodia (*)

Chhorvann Chhea

Leadership Developments for Leaders of NGOs and Business Sector in Yunnan, China (*)

Zhanjie Si

Raising Awareness of Health Needs of Low-Income Migrants and Refugees in Malaysia and Singapore (*)

Nicola Pocock – Jeremy Lim

Basic Literacy Course for Illiterate Children in Flores, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia (*)

Nila Tanzil

A Short Documentary: “The Faces of Inequity” in Bangkok, Thailand (*)

Natalie Phaholyothin – Jiruth Sriratanaban

Assessment of Livelihood and Health Status Among Waste Collectors in Hanoi, Viet Nam (*)

Hoang Van Minh – Pham Kieu Oanh – Nguyen Thu Ha

Community-Led Impact Monitoring from Coal-Fired Power Plant in Thailand-Laos Border (*)

Somporn Pengkam – Channé Suy Lan

Policy Gaps in Protecting the Health of Migrant Workers in Malaysia and China and Returnees in Myanmar (*)

Rui Deng – Tharani Loganathan – Pan Myat Mon – Wai Wai Han

Voices of Hope (*)

Benjamin Lawrence Aritao – Do Thuy Duong

Co-Growing Leadership for Early Childhood Development, China (*)

Fan Jiang – Jin Xu

Improving Access to Healthcare & Livelihood Support for Urban Poor Women in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and Manila, Philippines (*)

Nur Khaulah Fadzil – Ana Santos

Engaging Stakeholders in Mapping Health Facilities Distribution in Indonesia, Myanmar, and Philippines (*)

Tiara Marthias – Beverly Lorraine Ho – Bawi Mang Lian

Diversity and Inclusion Module for Elementary Students in Myanmar and Philippines (*)

Abelardo Apollo David Jr. – Han Win Htat

Health Equity in Post-Conflict Areas of Mindanao, Philippines (*)

Noraida Abdullah Karim – Abdel Jamal Disangcopan – Sharon Low

Emergent Innovation for the Equity Initiative in Thailand (*)

Borwornsom Leerapan – May Sripatanaskul – Pairoj Saonuam – Kotchakorn Voraakhom

Addressing Knowledge Gaps in Post-Partum Depression Prevention in Viet Nam (*)

Hoang Tu Anh – Bui Thi Thuy – Nguyen Thai Lan – Nguyen Tran Nguyen

Improve Equitable Primary Health Access for Hard-to Reach-and Marginalized Groups in Ratanakiri, Cambodia (*)

Sam Oeun – Sean Sok Phay

Improving Chronic Disease Patients' Experiences Through Digital Patient Engagement in Beijing, China (*)

Xiao Long – Kun Zhang

Empowering Local Key Actors for Better Programming of Stunting Alleviation in Nusa Tenggara Timur, Indonesia (*)

Goris Mustaqim – Blandina Rosalina Bait – Gideon Cauton – Le Thi Nhat

Health Communication as Equity Challenge: An Art-Based Health Literacy Toolkit with Registered Migrant Workers in Bukit Tinggi, Pahang, Malaysia (*)

Letchimi Devi Doraisamy – Alfredo Matugas Coro – Nguyen Quoc Thanh

Telling Our Own Stories (*)

Vannaphone Sitthirath – Panusart Poonkasetwattana

Increasing Self-Awareness of Implicit Biases among Equity Initiative Fellows Using Process-Oriented Psychology (*)

Ratawit Ouaprachanon – Raudah Mohd Yunus

Improving Early Child Development in A Disaster-Prone Community, Philippines (*)

Gideon Lasco – Rapeepong Suphanchaimat – Yunting Zhang – Phetdavanh Leuangvilay

Women-led Health Literacy and Access for Improving Health Equity Among the Underserved in Malaysia (*)

Sok Teng Tan – Fransiska Felentina Sugi – Sara Maria Pereira

Using Legislative Theatre to Initiative Grassroot Policy Change on Health Equity of Myanmar Migrant Workers in Thailand (*)

Celyn Celyn – Sornchai Chatwiriychai

Health Equity Index Project ()**

Jeremy Lim | National University of Singapore

Strengthening Network of Health Managers Towards Equitable Health Care Services in Communities, Cambodia ()**

Chhorvann Chhea | National Institute of Public Health

Empowering Ethnic Health Equity at the Borders ()**

Somporn Pengkam | Chulalongkorn University Social Research Institute

Championing Village-Based Stunting Alleviation Program in Indonesia ()**

Goris Mustaqim | Asgar Muda Foundation

Building an Equitable Health and Financial Access for Coastal Fishers in the Island of Siargao, Philippines ()**

Alfredo Matugas Coro | RARE, Philippines

Breaking Structural Inequities Uplifting Plantation Workers Dignity, Malaysia ()**

Letchimi Devi Doraisamy | North South Initiative

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Project, Philippines ()**

Noraida Abdullah Karim | Community and Family Services International

Health Information Capacity Building ()**

Sharon Low | The Knowledge House for Development

Health, Employment and Advocacy: Inclusion of Refugees in the National Agenda ()**

Raudah Mohd Yunus – Nur Khaulah Fadzil | IMARET (IMAM Response & Relief Team)

Equity 360 Viet Nam ()**

Hoang Tu Anh | Center for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population

Health-Private Sector Collaboration Model for Equity in Thailand and Southeast Asia ()**

May Sripatanaskul | LUKKID Co., Ltd

Institutionalization of Teletherapy and Remote Learning in Community-Based Rehabilitation Programs ()**

Abelardo Apollo I. David, Jr. | Independent Living Learning Centre, Inc

Developing a Regional Strategy on Mental Health Issues Faced by Gay, Bisexual and Men who have sex with Men (GBMSM) and Transgender Communities in Southeast Asia ()**

Panusart Poonkasetwattana | APCOM Foundation

Planning and Systems Design to Support the Development of TeleHealth Services to Improve Access to Health in Conflict-Affected Areas of Myanmar ()**

Bawi Mang Lian | Burmese American Community Institute Inc.

Increasing Equitable Essential Service for Survivors of Violence Against Women and Girls in Cambodia ()**

Sean Sok Phay and Channe Suy Lan | Child Helpline Cambodia / Commune Committee for Women and Children / Community Managed Health Equity Fund

School Based Mental Health Program Initiative to Strengthen Family with Mental Health Risk ()**

Rennta Chrisdiana | Indonesian Family Advocacy Institute / Rumpun Nurani

Reform in Government Contract System Procurement & Building Workers Voice ()**

Letchimi Devi | Government Contract Workers Network / Parastoo Theater

Resilient Health System in Conflict-Affected Areas ()**

Bawi Mang Lian | Chin Health Organization / TeleHealth Myanmar

Building Community Partnerships for HIV Equity in Palawan ()**

Amina Evangelista Swanepoel | Roots of Health

Financial Protection for Health Equity ()**

Ana P. Santos | Likhaan Center for Women's Health Inc.

Strengthening Communication for Equity of the Marginalized in Thailand and Border ()**

Pianporn Deetes | Hill Area and Community Development Foundation

Community Approaches to Maternal and Newborn Health Equity in Rural Timor-Leste ()**

Natarajan Rajaraman | Associação Maluk Timor

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Members list is arranged in alphabetical order by their first name

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A Note of Appreciation

We extend our deep appreciation to all who have contributed their time, expertise, and ideas to the Equity Initiative. We are especially grateful to all who have served on our Global Advisory Board, Southeast Asia Program Advisory Committee, Regional Selection Committee, and National Committees. The Equity Initiative has grown stronger thanks to their contributions.

FOR HEALTH EQUITY
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Atlantic Fellows



The Equity Initiative is a program
of The China Medical Board
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