

# Proximity Designs and Social Enterprise in Myanmar

# Proximity Designs



สิ่งที่เขาทำคือ เจาะกลุ่มเกษตรกรซึ่งเป็นประชากร 70% ของประเทศ ไปเรียนรู้ชีวิตของพวกเขา ไปทำความรู้จักเป้าหมายในชีวิตของพวกเขา ไปทำความรู้จักกับความฝันของพวกเขา จากนั้นก็เอาปัญหา ความไม่สะดวกในการใช้ชีวิตรวมถึงในการทำมาหากิน มาตั้งเป็นโจทย์ แล้วออกแบบเป็นผลิตภัณฑ์และบริการมาขาย สินค้าของ Proximity มองเผินๆ ดูเป็นของบ้านๆ ไร้ซึ่งสุนทรีย์ด้านการออกแบบ (หากมองด้วยสายตาของคนนิยมงานดีไซน์เก๋ๆ จากโลกตะวันตก) แต่สินค้าของพวกเขา เช่น เครื่องปั้มน้ำ โซลาเซลล์ มีความหมายกับชาวบ้านมากมาย เพราะมันคือสินค้าราคาโคตรถูก (ค่าออกแบบและเงินเดือนพนักงาน ได้รับมาจากการขอทุน ต้นทุนสินค้าจึงเหลือแค่ค่าผลิตเท่านั้น) แต่คุณภาพดี ชาวบ้านมีผู้ฐานะต่ำต้อยเข้าถึงได้ และสินค้าเหล่านี้มีเป้าหมายเพื่อช่วยให้ชาวบ้านมีประสิทธิภาพในการผลิตมากขึ้น รวมถึงมีรายได้มากขึ้น



## New solutions to ancient problems

Proximity Designs is an award-winning, social enterprise based in Yangon, Myanmar. We design and deliver affordable, income-boosting products and services that complement the entrepreneurial spirit of rural families.

<http://www.proximitydesigns.org/>

# PROXIMITY PARTNERS

## Join our community of investors

We work with a range of partners - private foundations, bi-lateral institutions, leading universities, development banks, corporations, family foundations, design firms and individuals. These partnerships are a key reason for Proximity's success in Myanmar.

In all of our partnerships, we look for close alignment between our mission and the investor's interests and goals.

## Why partner with Proximity?

**Results-driven:** Support thousands of enterprising families in their efforts to increase incomes and achieve a better life.

**Focused:** Investments are focused on some of Myanmar's most critical needs and exciting opportunities for large scale social impact.

**Sustainable:** Invest in a market-based approach to tackling poverty that is sustainable and creates incomes and hope.

**Cost Effective:** Contributions to Proximity have some of the best social returns, or 'bang for buck', of any approach to addressing extreme poverty.

For more information about contributing to Proximity's work, contact Lai Win Phyu at [laiwinphyu@proximitydesigns.org](mailto:laiwinphyu@proximitydesigns.org)



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## IRRIGATION PRODUCTS

# Game changers

*Smart designs that are having a major impact*

Our line of affordable irrigation products - four foot-powered water pumps, a complete drip irrigation system and two portable water storage tanks - replace the back-breaking and time-consuming work of hauling water from the well to the field in heavy sprinkler cans.

Designed to work independently, or together, a full set can cost a farmer just \$71, but reduce time spent on farming to just a few minutes, and increase yield sizes by 33%.

[Red Rhino](#) | [Baby Elephant](#) | [Baby Buffalo](#) | [The Original](#) | [Drip](#) | [Storage](#)

## INSIDE PROXIMITY

### Design >>



Human centered design in Myanmar

### Fellowships >>



Monsoon internships and fellowships at Proximity

### Make >>



Proud to be made in Myanmar

### Scale >>



Colorful Shan State is famed for its cool weather and fresh fruits. Come explore.

### Distribute >>



By bus, by boat, by rickshaw, by truck, we get it there

### Partners >>



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## Proximity Designs

By Laura Hattendorf, Michael Kennedy, Laurent de Clara, Yin Li  
2014 | Case No. IDE06 | Length 26 pgs.

Marketing, Management

The case follows Jim and Debbie Aung-Din Taylor, an American couple with backgrounds in international development, as they found and build Proximity Designs, a social enterprise in Myanmar. Initially, the Taylors are focused on redesigning the treadle pump for Myanmar farmers, using design thinking and processes to formulate a pump that is affordable to their extremely impoverished target customers. However, the Taylors soon realize that they also need to build a distribution network in order to sell their products. Along the way, a natural disaster (Cyclone Nargis) and political reforms in the country create both new challenges and new opportunities for Proximity.

### Learning Objective

The teaching objective of the Proximity Designs case is to explore two

### Faculty Authors

Laura Hattendorf



Laura Hattendorf »  
Lecturer



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#### Upcoming Events

**19th ASEF University  
(AU19)**  
12 days in 2015

**4th ASEM Rectors'  
Conference and  
Students' Forum  
(ARC4)**  
January 2015 (tbc)

**14th Informal ASEM  
Seminar on Human  
Rights**  
18-20 November  
2014

## Emerging Social Entrepreneurs in Myanmar

### Skills for Social Entrepreneurs



A dynamic group of 30 emerging social entrepreneurs from Asia and Europe participated in a workshop **"Skills for Social Entrepreneurs"** in Yangon, Myanmar (21-23 May 2012). ASEF collaborated with the British Council to host this workshop. This was ASEF's first initiative in Myanmar which was supported by the Government of Japan and the United Kingdom. Besides representatives from Myanmar, social entrepreneurs from Denmark, Indonesia, Philippines, Poland, Singapore, Sweden, Thailand and Vietnam were part of the workshop.

"There's a growing business community here (in Yangon) that has prioritised societal needs over profit," remarked Sol Iglesias, ASEF's Director for Intellectual Exchange department. Sol was one of the representatives from the organisers who participated in this event.

The three-day programme included networking, in-depth discussions, group activities and field visits within the city and outskirts of Yangon. Participants were divided into four groups as they visited a few local social enterprises in the fields of public health, education, environment and tourism and heritage. Shwe Minn Tha Foundation was one of the organisations visited by the participants in the public health group. The Foundation was set up in 2008 and works towards sustainable development for people with disabilities. "The Yangon city development authority is willing to mainstream disability. Such positive changes will enable inclusive social development," shared Mr Myat Thu Winn, President of the Foundation and Director of Shwe Minn Tha Enterprises.

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## British Council, East Asia

Visit official website: <http://eastasia.britishcouncil.org/public/Content/default.html>



### Related projects

#### Developing a Better Policy Context for Social Enterprises in Asia and Europe

15 Jul 2013 - 16 Jul 2013

Overview The Asia-Europe Foundations (ASEF) Public Health Network and British Council's Skills for Social Entrepreneurs programme brought in Asia-Europe senior policy influencers in Berlin for a two...

#### Skills for Social Entrepreneurs

21-23 May 2012; 18-20 June 2012

What is Skills for Social Entrepreneurs? Skills for Social Entrepreneurs is a capacity building programme that provides skills and support systems for a new community of social entrepreneurs. The first...

#### Connect2Culture: Art, Culture and Climate Change Follow-up Projects

July 2009 - August 2010

In 2009, the Connect2Culture programme supported collaborative multi-disciplinary projects on art and environment between

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## Government of Japan



Visit official website: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/>

### Related projects

#### Workshop "Risk Communications for Public Health Emergencies: What to Learn from Real-life Events"

2-3 October 2014

From 2010 to 2013, the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) Public Health Network implemented the Accurate Scenarios Active Preparedness (ASEF-ASAP) project to strengthen multi-sector pandemic preparedness...

#### Health of Chinese and Filipino Migrants in Milan: Present Challenges Potential Opportunities

9 October 2013

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and Fondazione ISMU, with the support of Milan Municipality, will co-host a Public Event "Health of Chinese and Filipino Migrants in Milan: Present...

#### Expert Consultation - Strengthening Bi-regional Capacity for Managing Public Health Emergencies

16 - 17 Sep 2013

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) Public Health Network organises a consultation round with its key-stakeholders, including international and regional organisations, to take stock of the priorities for...