

# ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network 2023:

Inspiring Change, Creating Impact

Asean-Japan Centre 2024



Edited by Katrina Navallo, Programme Manager, ASEAN-Japan Centre  
Layout and content by Pushpin Inc.  
Copyright by ASEAN Promotion Centre on Trade, Investment and Tourism.  
All rights reserved. March 2024.

ISBN 978-4-910293-52-3

**Acknowledgements:**

ASEAN-Japan Centre Research & Policy Advocacy Cluster

AJYELN 2023 Fellows and their Supervisors

AJYELN 2023 mentors:

Maria Aurora Tinio

Yasmin Nabilah binti Mohd Fauzee, PhD

Songphathay Luangmuninthone

Masuda Haruna

Nurlatifah

Srey Pich Poeung

Nam Anh Tran

Thant Zin Tun, PhD

**Supporting Ministries and Organizations:**

Japan Ministry of Environment

Brunei Ministry of Education STEP Centre

Cambodia Ministry of Environment

Lao PDR Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Malaysia Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change

Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Environment Management Bureau

Viet Nam Ministry of Environment

East Asia Research Institute – Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris (ERIA-RKCMPD)

ASEAN Youth Organization (AYO)

For inquiries, contact the ASEAN-Japan Centre:

1F Shin-Onarimon Bldg. 6-17-19 Shimbashi, Minato-ku

Tokyo, Japan 105-0004

Research and Policy Advocacy Cluster

Email: [info\\_rpa@asean.or.jp](mailto:info_rpa@asean.or.jp)

Website: <https://www.asean.or.jp>

# About AJYELN

The ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network (AJYELN) is a product of the years-long initiative of the ASEAN-Japan Centre to reach as many young people as possible and educate them about the perils of the marine plastic debris problem.

Six ASEAN countries (Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand) are among the world's highest ocean plastic polluters in 2021 (Meyer et al. 2021). The recognition of marine plastic debris as a regional issue of great importance was formally recognized in 2019 when the 10 ASEAN countries adopted the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Region and the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris. In 2020, the ASEAN Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris (2021-2025) was launched, and this contains the phased actions that ASEAN member states are expected to conduct during this five-year period.

The Japanese government and ASEAN-Japan Centre have actively supported environmental initiatives in the ASEAN region. Since 2020, the Centre has brought together young leaders from ASEAN and Japan to address the issue of marine plastic debris. Collaborating with 22 ASEAN and Japanese students, they launched the **"Future Leaders' Declaration on ASEAN-Japan Cooperation for International Marine Plastic Waste,"** the first student-led declaration on the topic in the ASEAN and Japan regions.

Following the declaration, the **"ASEAN-Hiroshima Eco-School for Marine Plastic Waste Education"** was initiated as a pilot project in 2021. This project aimed to implement the recommendations from the declaration, specifically focusing on education and awareness, as well as youth engagement. The success of the pilot project led to its expansion in 2022, creating a movement of environmental awareness among young students in ASEAN countries. This expanded initiative is now known as the **"ASEAN-Japan Ecoschool"** and has been extended to other ASEAN member states.

After hearing the insights and feedback from students who participated in the Ecoschool lectures, we realized the importance of empowering youth to become leaders in their local communities. This led to the establishment of the AJYELN, which specifically targets high school students. By instilling proper behaviors towards sustainable environmental practices in this impressionable age group, they can effectively influence their peers and families, creating a ripple effect of positive environmental change within their communities.

Recognizing that financial resources are essential for implementing change, the Centre provided a modest seed fund to kickstart the environmental projects of these young leaders. With a focus on addressing the issue of marine plastic debris, the program aimed to curb plastic pollution on land and in the seas. Moving forward, AJYELN aspires to become a recognized and impactful program and network of young leaders who can drive positive change in the environment and contribute to our sustainable future.

In 2023, the AJYELN program was officially launched, and 36 young fellows out of more than 100 applicants from ten ASEAN member states and Japan have been selected to champion their plastic pollution-combating projects in their countries. This publication chronicles the success and challenges of the AJYELN fellows as they implemented their environmental projects, as well as their journeys to becoming young environmental leaders.

## Contents

About AJYELN	1
Messages	3
AJYELN Report	8
AJYELN Brunei Fellows	12
AJYELN Cambodia Fellows	17
AJYELN Indonesia Fellows	19
AJYELN Japan Fellows	24
AJYELN Lao PDR Fellows	26
AJYELN Malaysia Fellows	32
AJYELN Myanmar Fellows	36
AJYELN Philippines Fellows	39
AJYELN Singapore Fellows	44
AJYELN Thailand Fellows	46
AJYELN Vietnam Fellows	49
Fellow's Feedback	53
Reflections	57
2024 AJYELN Applications	67



# Foreword

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I laud the remarkable achievements of the ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders' Network (AJYELN) Program. Comprising of 36 high school students from 10 ASEAN member states and Japan, this dynamic network has embarked on a mission to combat plastic pollution and foster sustainable environmental practices.

In the capstone Symposium in March 2024, these young leaders showcased their innovative projects addressing plastic pollution in their local communities. Their unwavering commitment to changing behaviors and creating a foundation for multi-stakeholder action is commendable. Through mentoring and funding, AJYELN empowers these environmental advocates to be leaders of today, driving impactful solutions.

By the end of this year's program, a total of 39 plastic pollution awareness and engagement campaigns have been organized the ASEAN region. An estimated 1 million Japanese yen has also been disbursed towards these activities, further expanding our goal to educate the youth on the hazards of plastic pollution in the region. The AJYELN network also boasts more than 21,000 followers online on Facebook and Instagram, mostly from young individuals aged 15-35 years old from ASEAN member states and Japan. This is a testament to the growing recognition and position of AJYELN as an important and leading youth organization in Japan and the ASEAN region.

AJYELN's vision transcends borders, bridging inspiration across ASEAN and Japan. Let us celebrate their passion, dedication, and unwavering commitment to a sustainable future.



Hirabayashi Kunihiko, MD, PhD  
Secretary General, ASEAN-Japan Centre

## Welcome Message

Excellency Nishimura Akihiro, Minister of the Environment of Japan, Doctor Kunihiko Hirabayashi, Secretary General of the ASEAN Japan Center.

Distinguished experts, student fellows, and youth leaders from ASEAN Member States and Japan Ladies and gentlemen, a very good afternoon on behalf of the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Excellency Dr. Kao Kim Hourn.

It is a great honor for me to welcome all of you to the first ASEAN Japan's Junk Environmental Leaders Network Symposium in Tokyo, Japan, under the theme "Inspiring to Change, Creating the Impact," which is a follow-up to the launch of the

network on September 21, 2023.

I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to the ASEAN Japan Center for its unwavering support in fostering scientific partnership between ASEAN and Japan, particularly by actively promoting education and youth engagement in emerging environmental issues. The ASEAN Japan Center has notably spearheaded commendable initiatives such as the Sustainable Blue Seas and the Planet Program, strengthening the network leaders.

My heartfelt appreciation also extends to the government of Japan as one of ASEAN's longstanding partners. Last year, ASEAN and Japan celebrated the 50th anniversary of friendship and cooperation. Over the past five decades, the partnership has made significant strides, especially in people-to-people exchanges and youth engagement. The joint vision statement on ASEAN Japan Friendship and Cooperation, along with its implementation plan adopted at the Commemorative Summit in Tokyo last year, reaffirms the commitment to fostering heart-to-heart relationships based on mutual trust, understanding, and respect.

Japan has remarkably supported ASEAN's regional efforts in this area through flagship programs such as the Japan East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths, the JENESYS Japanese Language Partners, the Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program, the ASEAN World Youth Judging Project, and more. These youth exchange programs have nurtured stronger friendships and commonalities among the future generations of ASEAN and Japan, who are now actively contributing in various fields of high importance to both regions.



Ekkaphab Phanthavong  
ASEAN Secretariat, Socio-Cultural  
Community Deputy Secretary General

The ASEAN Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network is an important addition to these efforts, focusing on youth engagement in emerging environmental issues such as marine plastic debris. It aligns with the leaders' commitment at the Commemorative Summit and significantly contributes to the objectives of the Strategic Program for the ASEAN Climate Environment. This program aims to address urgent global crises, including climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss.

Promoting youth involvement in environmental protection has been among ASEAN's top priority agendas. To date, we have conducted key initiatives that engage young people and promote public awareness, including the ASEAN Eco-Schools Program, ASEAN Youth Eco-Champions, ASEAN Youth Environment Forum, and ASEAN Environment Knowledge Hub. The ASEAN Young Environmental Leaders Network resonates with the ASEAN's agenda and commitment, as reflected in the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Region. This declaration emphasizes multi-stakeholder engagement in advocacy programs and outreach activities to combat marine debris.

Furthermore, it contributes to implementing the ASEAN Regional Action Plan on Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Member States, launched in May 2021, particularly in research, innovation, capacity building, public awareness, education, and outreach.

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow youth leaders, youth is our vital asset for the future and our planet. Nearly one-third of ASEAN's population comprises youth, and we recognize their crucial roles in our community and environment. It is a pleasure for ASEAN to witness the creative solutions and actions of young people in ASEAN and Japan to combat marine pollution. This symposium reflects the concrete and practical contributions of the young generations to ASEAN leaders' vision on this important issue. It exemplifies efforts to recognize, showcase, and scale up the insights and innovations in addressing regional environmental challenges at the individual and local community levels.

I wish to express my highest gratitude to the Government of Japan and the ASEAN Japan Center for their enormous support of ASEAN and their inspiring efforts in engaging youth to address regional environmental challenges concretely. The kickoff for ASEAN's Youth Action for a Just Zero Waste Future will certainly add to our collective approach to preserving our region's environment and realizing the joint vision statement on ASEAN Japan Friendship and Cooperation.

I congratulate the youth for their active participation and look forward to witnessing their further contributions and achievements through this program. I am confident that this initiative and the young generations will have significant positive impacts on our society. I wholeheartedly wish this symposium a tremendous success.

Thank you very much.



Mr. Souvadeth Soukchaleun  
Deputy Director General  
Alternate Lao PDR ASOEN  
Department of Planning and Finance  
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Lao PDR

## Message of Support

On behalf of the ASEAN Senior Official on Environment of Lao PDR, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the invitation and it's my great honor to represent the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment to deliver my speech in this significant and remarkable event on the 1st ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leadership Network Symposium "Inspiring Change, Creating Impact" today.

As we are aware that the ASEAN-Japan Center has served since 2021 as the regional knowledge center for sharing and exchange the information particular to enhance and raise the awareness on the environment protection as well as the plastic pollution and waste management. This center has provided the technical support in-terms of pilot project for schools in ASEAN Member States to enhance and encourage the participation of young people to contribute in the sustainable environmental protection.

As we are aware that plastic pollution is a global problem that needs to be addressed sustainably. The effects of plastic waste cause pollution in many ways, such as: Open air pollution from incineration affects human health, visual pollution, affects the beauty of nature, affects tourism, contamination of agricultural soil, adversely affects the health of soil and plants through absorption, emissions of greenhouse gases and emissions from combustion; Affects aquatic and marine animals, contaminates the human food chain, also releases harmful substances into the environment, making it easier for lions to absorb harmful substances.

In line with the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025, the Government of Lao PDR has emphasized on sustainable development to ensure that socio-economic growth and environmental protection are carried out simultaneously. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has developed, implemented, and amended policies mechanisms, and legal instruments to ensure the implementation particularly the measures to address waste management, environmental pollution as well as nature-based tourism and green employment in order to the Vision: Achieve a green, clean and beautiful Laos by developing an efficient plastic recycling system, social participation and prevention of pollution for sustainable environment by 2030.

Young leaders play a crucial role in inspiring and better the world forwards through passions and initiatives. Youth participation is important and potential in driving the environmental development and creating impacts throughout the community, with the involvement of young leaders in activities particularly implementing Sustainable Development Goals, etc. In addition, to highlight the issues and challenges, I hope that this symposium will inspire ASEAN-Japan to take stronger action. On the final note, I am confident that the 1st ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leader Network Symposium on "Inspiring Change, Creating Impact" is the supporting platform for the young leaders and all the delegates to share lessons learned and experiences. I encourage you all to keep continuing creating impacts on environmental protection.  
*Khob Jai Lai Lai!* Thank you very much!



## Message of Support

Ladies and gentlemen and our remarkable young leaders, today marks a significant milestone as we gather to celebrate the conclusion of the ASEAN Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network's First Year program.

We are honored to have collaborated with the ASEAN Japan Centre since 2021 to raise awareness of the plastic pollution issue on different fronts. The Regional Knowledge Center for Marine Plastic Debris, of which I was appointed to become the director last July, has one of its missions to raise awareness of the money plastic debris problem within the ASEAN Plus Three region, and we consider the young generation to be one of the most important stakeholders.

To all the young leaders gathered here, I extend my congratulations for your dedication and hard work in advocating for a plastic pollution-free environment.

Over the past year, you have designed and implemented innovative projects to reduce plastic pollution.

Your initiatives, ranging from recycling programs and beach cleanups to educational campaigns and the development of comic series with environmental messages, have not only raised awareness but also inspired tangible change in your communities as you showcase your projects and exchange experiences. Let's view this moment not as not the end, but rather as a launchpad for future endeavors.

Your participation in this program signifies the importance of a youth commitment and initiatives in addressing the marine plastic issue in your region and its impact on the region.

I urge you to continue to inspire others to join the cause and raise awareness in your community about the importance of this issue.

Additionally to the new cohort, I encourage you to follow in the footsteps of these change-makers and use this inspiration to implement impactful projects in your community.

Congratulations on your accomplishments, and best wishes for your continued journey as environmental leaders.



Mr. Reo Kawamura  
Regional Knowledge  
Centre for Marine Plastic  
Debris - ERIA Director

# AJYELN Report

## Overall Impact in Quick Numbers

36

### Young Environmental Leaders

aged 15 to 18 years old participated and received mentorship on environmental awareness activity implementation

1,000,000  
JPY (6,591 USD)

utilized on the implementation of 39 student-led activities by the AJYELN fellows

7,791

### Elementary and High school Students

reached and learned about the environmental implications of plastic pollution and proper practices on plastic waste disposal and recycling

39

### Plastic Pollution Awareness Campaigns and Activities

across 10 ASEAN member states and Japan

## Brief Overview

The ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network (AJYELN) is a network of young regional champions in combating the plastic pollution crisis selected from the ten ASEAN Member States and Japan. Organized by the ASEAN-Japan Centre, the network promotes youth-led solutions to the plastic pollution issue in the region.



## Activity Highlights

The ASEAN-Japan Centre launched the open recruitment from April to May 31, 2023.

More than 140 applicants from ASEAN countries and Japan have applied for the program, and 11 teams composed of 36 fellows have been selected to become part of the first cohort of the network.

### Selection Basis

The applicants were selected based on motivation (20%), scope, outcomes and project impact (35%), project feasibility (20%), and creativity and innovation (25%). The selection committee comprises representatives from the ASEAN-Japan Centre and ERIA-Regional Knowledge Center for Marine Plastic Debris, who actively support the program.

### Implementation Activities

- Regional engagements:** Endorsement was requested from the ASEAN Working Group on Environmental Education at their quarterly meeting on July 15, 2023. The ASEAN-Japan Environmental Dialogue presented the program's accomplishments on August 2, 2023.
- Leadership and project management training:** The 36 fellows underwent a two-day online leadership and project management training program in July and September 2023. Leading youth environmental speakers from the Philippines, Indonesia, and Japan were invited to conduct the training.
- Disbursement of seed money:** In September 2023, each team received 50% of the seed money (100,000 JPY) as initial funding to implement their projects. Based on their respective project budgets, the teams spent the amount up to a maximum of 100,000 JPY.
- Project implementation:** The 11 teams implemented their projects from August 2023 to January 2024. A total of 37 AJYELN activities were conducted across all ASEAN countries and Japan.
- Capstone symposium:** The program outcomes and accomplishments of the 36 fellows will be featured in a hybrid symposium on March 15, 2024, in Tokyo, Japan

## Impact Summary

Country (local community)	No. of fellows	No. of activities	Total no. of people reached (partial)	Supporting local organizations	Project completion
Brunei (Tutong)	4	7	543	N/A	100%
Cambodia (Phnom Penh)	4	2	101	1	100%
Indonesia (Aceh)	4	4	951	1	100%
Japan (Hiroshima)	2	2	18	2	100%
Lao PDR (Vientiane)	4	5	1000	N/A	100%
Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur)	4	5	600	4	100%
Myanmar (Patheingyi)	4	4	601	N/A	100%
Philippines (Davao)	4	4	134	9	100%
Singapore (Singapore)	4	1	1400	N/A	100%
Thailand (Chiang Mai)	1	2	50	N/A	100%
Viet Nam (Vinh Phuc)	1	3	2393	1	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>7791</b>	<b>18</b>	

## Supporting Ministries and Organizations

We also give special thanks to:

- Japan Ministry of Environment
- Brunei Ministry of Education STEP Centre
- Cambodia Ministry of Environment
- Lao PDR Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
- Malaysia Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change
- Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Environment Management Bureau
- Viet Nam Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
- East Asia Research Institute – Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris (ERIA-RKCMRD)
- ASEAN Youth Organization (AYO)

# Testimonials

## From Brunei

"I learned a lot about environmental initiatives and teamwork through AJYELN. It has positively influenced my personal and professional growth, making me more aware and responsible regarding environmental issues."

## From Japan

"I was able to learn more about the waste problem in my community and take proactive action to solve the problem."

## From Malaysia

"AJYELN has helped me to understand the importance of dealing with the plastic pollution crisis, and also to realize that it is possible for youths to make a change in the world, no matter how big or small that change may be. AJYELN also helped me to change my mindset to believe that anything is possible if you put your mind to it."

## From the Philippines

"What I enjoyed about this program is that it allowed me to develop as a student leader - not only as an environmental leader but as a leader overall. Not only this, but it allowed me to get in touch with different people with different backgrounds and experiences, and it helped me learn much from them as well."

## From Thailand

"Having a mentor really relieves my stress as being a solo team. And the staff and AJC always give me support and help! I also enjoyed how flexible the program is. The participants get to do their projects creatively."

## From Cambodia

"AJYELN taught me so well how to be a "Better Leader" and how to communicate well."

## From Indonesia

"Being an AJYELN fellow was an enriching and fulfilling experience. The program offered a supportive community, valuable resources, and a platform to develop and showcase my skills. I am grateful for the opportunity and the memories I made during my time as a fellow."

## From Lao PDR

"I learned that the earth needs help from us, we need to do something to heal the earth, and it's on us. If it isn't us, then who will start to do anything today?"

## From Myanmar

"Being involved in AJYELN is quite challenging, particularly in engaging the entire community to collectively address environmental issues. Despite conducting workshops, there was difficulty in fostering consistent participation, with some individuals repeating environmentally detrimental practices. This underscores the ongoing need for effective education and outreach strategies to ensure lasting positive change."

# Student Profiles

## Brunei Darussalam

### About the Team

We are the Eco Warrior Guide group from Brunei Darussalam. Our team comprises four dedicated members: Hafezah, Nurafiqah, Nurul Afiqah, and Auni. Together, we work towards promoting environmental awareness and sustainability. Our project focuses on raising awareness about the detrimental effects of plastic pollution on our planet, including ecosystems, wildlife, and human health. We are committed to cleaning up and preventing further plastic pollution through innovative ideas and teamwork. Our ultimate goal is to create a cleaner and healthier environment where plastic no longer poses a threat. Remember, BE THE SOLUTION AND NOT THE POLLUTION!

School Name:  
Ma'had Islam  
Brunei

School Advisor  
Haji Muhammad Zuwaini  
bin Haji Aliyani

### Meet the Team



Nurafiqah Musfirah  
Binti Huzaimi



Nur Alyaa Hafezah  
Binti Rizal



Auni Binti Ahmad  
Aidil Aliyusah



Nurul Afiqah Binti  
Hasnan

### From the Adviser:

"I am truly delighted that my students and I have completed all seven projects and I am proud to represent our country in doing so. Each of the projects we undertook proceeded smoothly, and I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our AJYELN committee. Despite our communication being solely online, their guidance was invaluable in bringing our projects to fruition."

### Achievements

7 No. of activities

543 Total no. of people reached

100% Project completion

## Project #1: Awareness Campaign Launch on Plastic Pollution

Project Timeline:  
August 9, 2023

On August 9, 2023, the awareness campaign on plastic pollution took off at Ma'had Islam Brunei, addressing a diverse audience of 370 teachers and students from various levels. The objective of the awareness campaign was to highlight the consequences of plastic pollution on our planet, particularly the oceans, and to encourage proactive participation in finding solutions.



The Eco Warrior Guide group organized various activities, including informative presentations on plastic pollution and actionable solutions. To enhance engagement, enlightening videos and thought-provoking quizzes with rewards were incorporated into the program. A friendly competition was also launched, which included "Poster Palooza!", "Plastic-Free Production" and "Trash to Treasure" all helped students gain a more thorough and holistic understanding of the campaign.

### Key Takeaways:

AJYELN Brunei Fellows launched an awareness campaign on plastic pollution among 370 elementary and secondary students in Ma'had Islam Brunei. The program included a lecture by the fellows, educating students about microplastics and the harmful effects of plastic pollution, leaving them more informed about the environmental impact.



## Project #2: "Trashformer," the Plastic Segregation Champion

Project Timeline:  
August 2023 to  
October 2023

The Eco Warrior Guide continued the plastic waste-awareness-raising activities with the "Trashformer," a giant plastic trash bin designed to collect discarded plastic bottles. By October 2023, the bottles collected were used as art and crafts materials to be used for other activities.



The idea behind the Trashformer is to encourage students to separate plastic bottles from other plastic wastes in the school, and in the long run, to continue engaging the school community in practicing proper waste disposal and plastic segregation.

With the bottles collected, the team launched "Designing School's Gate," which enhanced the school's surroundings using the plastic bottles collected. With creative passion, imagination, and newfound awareness of proper plastic disposal, management, and segregation, the activity proved to be a valuable and practical educational activity for the participants. The project demonstrated a collective ability to employ creative solutions in tackling significant environmental challenges.



### Key Takeaways:

The Trashformer initiative at Ma'had Islam Brunei gave students a unique opportunity to collect plastic bottles. By actively engaging in this activity, students gained a firsthand understanding of the sheer volume of plastic bottles they use and discard daily.



## Project #3: Five Months of Fun and Learning for Plastic Waste Awareness

As part of the fellows' months-long series of activities to raise awareness among the students of Ma'had Islam Brunei in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, several booth games were organized that targeted the students in their school.

On September 30, the Eco Warrior Guide conducted mini booth games for students to increase their awareness regarding plastic pollution. The booth games related to plastic pollution aimed to engage the school community through fun and interactive games that capture their attention and interest in the fellows' environmental cause.

Apart from educational games, the team also used recycled plastic bottles, showing how these can be repurposed in multiple ways.

The final Grand Booth was launched on November 30, featuring three captivating games using items created from plastic bottles collected from the wire mesh. Overall, the games focused on raising awareness about plastic pollution in the community.



**Project Timeline:**  
August 2023 to  
December 2023

### Key Takeaways:

Through consistent environmental activities, the AJYELN Brunei fellows successfully raised awareness about plastic waste by conducting a series of school-wide campaigns from August to December 2023. Here, they engaged students and teachers, increasing their knowledge and inspiring positive change in their daily lives



## Project #4: Beach Cleaning Campaigns

On August 26, the Eco Warrior Guide led a beach cleaning campaign at Seri Kenangan Beach in Tutong, with 17 representatives from Ma'had Islam Brunei School. The campaign lasted an hour, covering a 1km stretch of coastline, and resulted in the collection of 15 bags of plastic bags weighing 56.65 kgs.

Last January 31, 2024, the Eco-Warrior Guide returned to the same beach with fellow students, teachers, and staff of Ma'had Islam Brunei. The campaign's objectives were to clean the beach and raise awareness about plastic pollution. With over 45 participants, they cleared the beach of 43.78 kilograms of collected waste.

In both cleaning sessions, the participants found the following plastic debris along the nearby road and coastline:

- Plastic bottles
- Straws
- Cigarette boxes and butts
- Beverage containers
- Snack packaging
- Fragmented nets
- Grass cutter nylon strings
- Tin cans
- Plastic buckets



**Project Timeline:**  
August 26, 2023 and  
January 31, 2024

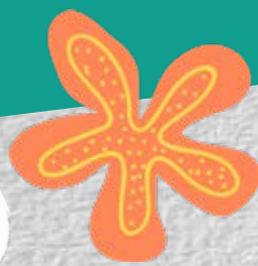
A noticeable lack of rubbish bins was provided near the picnic huts, which led the team to surmise that many beachgoers going for picnics tend to discard their leftover trash in the designated public bins. Due to waste mismanagement, however, bins always overflow with rubbish, forcing them to leave trash behind. Apart from encouraging a more regular waste collection schedule, beachgoers can also be taught proper disposal practices.

### Key Takeaways:

Most of the collected waste along the shoreline was food containers and cigarette butts. This could likely be due to improper waste management practices. Waste bins were overflowing with trash.



# Cambodia



## About the Team

As a result of rapid development and population growth, plastic pollution is becoming a serious problem in Cambodia. We plan to engage and raise awareness about the issues within our local community by doing a workshop that explains the environmental problem, how we can solve it, and how we can influence youth to protect our environment.



**School Name:**  
E2STEM  
Education Preah  
Yukunthor

## Meet the Team

Heng, Laychhoung  
Heng, Sieng  
Ny, Meaneat  
Douv, Sreynit



**School Advisor**  
The AJYELN program provides valuable first-hand experience for high school students to take a leadership role in addressing issues in their community and country.  
**Teacher Chansolyka Tep**

## Achievements

- 2** No. of activities
- 101** Total no. of people reached
- 100%** Project completion



## Project #1: Two-day Workshop on Plastic Management

**Project Timeline:**  
November 20 to 21, 2023

The two-day workshop on plastic management took place on November 20-21 in Glad Tidings International School's WTJ hall. The workshop was organized by Ho Ho Heroes with the support of E2STEM Education and Glad Tidings International School. It gathered 150 teachers and students from various levels – secondary (Grades 8-9) and high school (Grades 10-11). The team wanted to raise awareness of the disadvantages of using too much single-use plastic. The workshop's goal was to foster a sense of responsibility, encourage proactive participation in curbing plastic pollution, and inspire the students to develop their own innovative solutions to solve their community's plastic problem.



### Key Takeaways:

AJYELN Cambodia Fellows focused on solving single-use plastic problems in their community through the theme "A clean community starts from us," which paved the way for a plastic management workshop that completely immersed students and teachers in understanding the gravity of plastic pollution.



Dr. Katrina Navallo, Program Manager of ASEAN-Japan Centre set the tone for the program through a warm and inspiring message. Ho Ho Heroes took over numerous insightful topics on the nature of plastic, the dangers of single-use plastic, and how it continues to pollute the world.

After the capacity building, the audiences were invited to partake in the Solution Ideation challenge, which allows them to ideate a solution if they were given \$500.00 to solve a problem they see in their community. The Be Creative Challenge, on the other hand, challenged them to recycle plastic in creative ways.



# Indonesia



## About the Team

Our passion for literature has taken us on an infinite journey towards deep knowledge. With our public speaking skills, we share insights and inspiration with unlimited enthusiasm. Our desire for interaction and social exploration fuels our passion for trying new things and creating innovation. Boundless creativity is our main tool in facing challenges, and we always seek fresh and bold solutions. We believe that we can reach our best potential and inspire others through collaboration and creative thinking. Thank you for this opportunity to get to know each other better.

### School Name:

Seribu Bukit Senior High School

### School Advisor

Muhammad Syamsul S.Pd and Khairani Hanum

## Meet the Team



Kendra Jovita Amadea



Muliara Sakila



Nadia Avlia



Susila Lestari

## Achievements

4 No. of activities

951 Total no. of people reached

100% Project completion



## Project #1: "AJYELN Indonesia Go to School" for Plastic Waste Awareness

The "AJYELN Indonesia Go to School" event held on October 3, 2023, aimed to raise awareness about the issue of single-use plastics. The event involved visiting 10 high schools in Gayo Lues, distributing informative posters about plastic waste reduction, and conducting educational sessions. The primary objective was to deepen students' understanding of the hazards of single-use plastics and promote environmental care.

The event involved planning the campaign, designing and printing posters, obtaining school permissions, distributing posters, and conducting educational sessions. The feedback received highlighted positive changes in student behavior, such as using reusable tumblers instead of plastic bottles. The posters served as effective tools for disseminating messages and inspiring positive actions, contributing to a more environmentally friendly school environment.

Project Timeline:  
October 3, 2023



### Key Takeaways:

The "AJYELN Indonesia Go to School" event raised awareness about plastic waste and motivated student behavior changes. The posters played a crucial role in disseminating information and inspiring individuals to take action, contributing to larger efforts to reduce plastic waste and create a more sustainable environment.



## Project #2: Socialization Event for Plastic Waste Awareness

**Project Timeline:**  
October 20, 2023

The socialization event held at SMA Negeri Seribu Bukit on October 20, 2023, aimed to raise awareness among the younger generation about the dangers of plastic waste. The event saw active participation from external schools, teachers, and students from SMA Negeri Seribu Bukit.

The event fostered a sense of interconnectedness among different institutions and gave participants a better understanding of the plastic waste issue and potential solutions.



The socialization event had significant outcomes, including increased awareness among students about the dangers of plastic waste and acknowledgment of personal impact. Students were provided with practical solutions to address plastic pollution and became more conscious of their actions.



### Key Takeaways:

The event successfully engaged external schools, students, and teachers, and the feedback highlighted the event's success in achieving its goals. The event contributed to a more informed and environmentally conscious community.

## Project #3: Eco Art And Mini Craft Challenge

**Project Timeline:**  
October 30 to  
November 10, 2023

The Eco Art and Mini Craft competition, organized by SMA Negeri Seribu Bukit from October 30 to November 10, 2023, aimed to raise awareness about the dangers of waste, particularly plastic waste. The competition saw enthusiastic participation from 212 students across different year levels. The evaluation of the artworks took place on November 11, 2023, with criteria including creativity, relevance to environmental issues, and effectiveness in conveying solutions to the problem of plastic waste.



### Key Takeaways:

Led by the AJYELN Indonesia Fellows, the Eco Art and Mini Craft competition showcased diverse and creative craftsmanship. More importantly, it facilitated active engagement that raised awareness about waste hazards.



The event provided a platform for students to showcase their diverse artistic talents and propose innovative solutions to environmental challenges. Incorporating strong environmental messages in the artworks reflected a positive shift in students' mindset towards responsible waste management and sustainable practices.

# Project #4: Clean-Up and Environmental Awareness Activity

**Project Timeline:**  
December 20, 2023

On December 20, 2023, the fellows organized an environmental activity during a high school soccer tournament in Kabupaten Gayo Lues.

The event aimed to involve the game audience in a cleanup initiative and raise awareness about proper waste disposal.



Participants actively removed litter and waste, contributing to improving the local environment.

Informative sessions and interactive activities were organized to educate participants and the local community about waste disposal practices. The event was a success thanks to the active participation of students and the local community, which raised awareness of the importance of responsible waste management and empowered them towards responsibility in maintaining environmental cleanliness.



## Key Takeaways:

Participants and the local community displayed a growing sense of empowerment and responsibility, becoming agents of positive change. The event received positive feedback, with participants expressing increased awareness, appreciation for the integration with the soccer tournament, and a desire for ongoing sustainable activities.



# Japan



## About the Team

We will solve the "hidden garbage" problem. Hidden trash has been dumped in the back of parking lots or behind vending machines as if it were hidden. The hidden garbage problem causes plastic pollution and the decrease of attention to the garbage problem of those who live in Hiroshima City.

**School Name:**  
Hiroshima Jogakuin



## School Advisor

The focus on hidden trash is interesting. You continued to take on challenges without giving up, such as gathering partners and participants!!

Hiroki Kato

## Meet the Team



Nadeshiko Akita



Yayoi Nagashima

## Achievements

- 2 No. of activities
- 18 Total no. of people reached
- 2 Supporting local organizations
- 100% Project completion

# Projects #1 & #2: A Series of Waste Collecting Activities

The AJYELN Japan Fellows' project, "WCPUTA" (Whoever Can Pick Up Trash Anytime), aimed to eliminate hidden trash in Hiroshima and raise awareness about the trash problem. The event incorporated gamification ideas, making trash-picking a habit through competitive and goal-oriented activities. Participants who collected the most trash received prizes, and snacks were given to all participants to encourage participation. The use of apps to record collected waste and the customization of participants' tongs for waste collection added to the engagement and effectiveness of the event.



**Project Timeline:**  
December 23, 2023 and  
January 13, 2024

Promotion of the event was done through posters, flyers, social media accounts, and appearances on a local radio program. Efforts were made to reach out to schools and universities in Hiroshima, resulting in increased participation. The first event had some challenges, such as a lack of participants and scheduling issues, but positive aspects included effective communication with participants and increased awareness and interest in the garbage problem.

## Key Takeaways:

The WCPUTA project successfully organized trash pick-up events, raised awareness about hidden trash in Hiroshima, and encouraged participants to make trash picking a habit. The project provided valuable experience in event organization and participant recruitment. Despite challenges, the outcomes were positive, with increased awareness and interest in the garbage problem among participants.

The second event saw an increase in participants and improvements in organization and time management. Participants also enjoyed the activity and became more aware of the garbage problem, which the team hopes can remain sustainable.



# Lao PDR



## About the Team

We are the Lao PDR team representing the ASEAN-JAPAN Young Environment Leaders Network. Our mission revolved around "Waste Knowledge and Practice for a Cleaner Future Environment." We strive to empower individuals and communities in Laos and beyond with the knowledge and tools needed to address the issues. We aim to create a brighter and greener future for our region. Join us in our journey to a cleaner and sustainable environment for future generations.

**School Name:**  
Pathana School

### School Advisor

I am so glad to be able to mentors these fine fellows. I hope some day I can get chance to work with them again.

*Vilaphong Sengdara*

## Meet the Team



Alisia Saphaldy



Thipmala Keonammavong



Vankham Sibounthan



Phyraphol Pholsena

## Achievements

5 No. of activities

1000 Total no. of people reached

100% Project completion



# Project #1: Awareness Campaign on Separating Plastic Waste

Project Timeline:  
September 6, 2023

The student awareness campaign organized by the AJYELN Lao PDR fellows at Pathana School focused on educating 312 secondary students about the proper segregation of plastic waste. The campaign aimed to increase students' understanding of the harmful environmental impact of non-biodegradable plastic waste and raise their interest and awareness on this issue. The program included PowerPoint presentations, a poster competition, and interactive quizzes to engage the students and incentivize learning.

During the campaign, students actively participated by sharing their perspectives and viewpoints related to the problem of plastic pollution. They paid close attention during the presentations and collaborated by answering questions, demonstrating their eagerness to learn and make a positive impact.



## Key Takeaways:

The AJYELN fellows successfully created an engaging and informative campaign that not only increased students' knowledge but also encouraged them to take action and change their behavior regarding waste separation.



# Project #2: Online Game Day for the Environment

Project Timeline:  
October 2, 2023

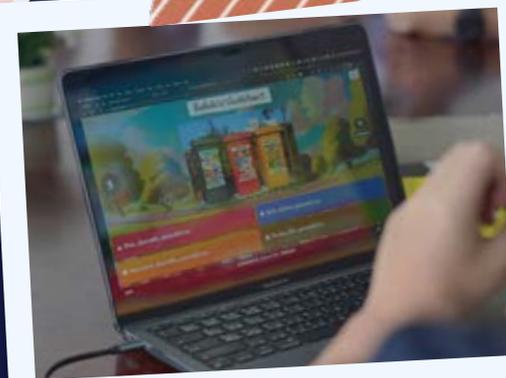
The AJYELN Laos Fellows organized a series of engaging activities as part of their environmental campaign at Pathana School. One of the highlights was the Kahoot quiz, an online game that tested the participants' knowledge about the environment, conservation, and sustainability. Thirty-six primary students from 18 classes joined the quiz, logging onto the Kahoot website from their laptops or mobile phones.

The digital nature of the quiz made it highly engaging, and three students emerged as winners, receiving recognition and prizes. This event not only provided an enjoyable learning experience but also fostered a stronger sense of environmental responsibility among the participants.



## Key Takeaways:

By making environmental awareness fun and interactive, the AJYELN Laos Fellows were able to deepen the participants' understanding of topics like climate change and sustainability. These activities play a crucial role in educating people and promoting environmental care.



## Project #3: Poster-Making Contest

The AJYELN Laos Fellows organized a poster-making contest among secondary students at Pathana School as part of their environmental campaigns. This contest aimed to promote creativity, sustain interest in the environmental impacts of plastic pollution, and nurture artistic expression among the youth. Twelve groups from six different classes participated, creating posters that effectively conveyed the goals and message of the team's environmental project.



**Project Timeline:**  
October 2, 2023

Three winners were selected and received prizes, showcasing the power of artistic expression in promoting environmental awareness and engagement among students. By recognizing the top three poster designs, the event celebrated the efforts and talents of the students while emphasizing the message of environmental stewardship.



### Key Takeaways:

Initiated by the Laos Fellows, the poster contest not only encouraged active participation among secondary students but also raised awareness about the team's environmental project. It allowed students to creatively and effectively promote the project among their peers, advocating for an important cause.



## Project #4: Drawing Contest

**Project Timeline:**  
October 2, 2023

The drawing contest organized by the AJYELN Laos Fellows successfully nurtured creative expression among primary students at Pathana School. With the theme of drawing their ideal vision of the environment, the contest encouraged the young participants to convey their ideas, dreams, and concerns about the environment through art. The contest activated their environmental imaginations and fostered critical thinking by prompting them to think deeply about what constitutes a better environment. Prizes were awarded to the top three participants, recognizing and celebrating their artistic talents and efforts.



This contest, which was part of a series of campaigns and activities by the AJYELN Laos Fellows, aimed to promote environmental awareness among primary and secondary students. The fellows saw the contest as an opportunity to bring out the creativity and imagination of the young students while instilling in them a sense of environmental consciousness.



### Key Takeaways:

Art can be crucial in shaping our belief systems and actions. The Imagining Our Ideal Environment drawing contest not only encouraged artistic expression but also served as a platform for promoting environmental awareness and inspiring positive change. The event helped foster a sense of responsibility for shaping the future of our environment.



# Project #5: Green Observer Volunteer Initiative Launch

The Green Observer Volunteer Initiative, organized by the AJYELN Lao fellows, aimed to raise environmental awareness and promote sustainable waste management practices among secondary students at Pathana School. The initiative engaged 54 volunteers, called "Green Observers," who actively monitored and performed waste management practices in their respective classrooms. Color-coded bins were provided and installed in every classroom, designated for different types of waste. The Green Observers oversaw the correct waste disposal in these bins, ensuring proper sorting and submitting weekly reports to assess the program's effectiveness.



**Project Timeline:**  
October 24, 2023

## Key Takeaways:

The Green Observer Volunteer Initiative showcased the power of proactive environmental stewardship within a school community. This also serves as a good example for other schools in Lao PDR seeking to improve their waste management procedures and promote environmental responsibility—volunteerism can indeed make a difference.



All these led to favorable outcomes. Waste separation within the school significantly improved, reducing contamination and increasing the efficiency of recycling efforts. The program raised environmental awareness among the student body and fostered a sense of responsibility for proper waste management.

# Malaysia



## About the Team

We are Team BeachBud from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in Southeast Asia. Malaysia is ranked third on the list of countries contributing to marine plastic pollution. As Malaysians, we feel the severity and seriousness of this situation and decided it was time to take action if we wanted a change. Therefore, we are working on a machine to improve the current condition of plastic pollution. Our solution, "BeachUp," which functions to maintain the cleanliness of beaches, is made possible through extensive research. We sincerely hope "BeachUp" extends throughout the world for each and every country to make a difference and experience true change.

**School Name:**  
Sekolah Menengah  
Kebangsaan  
Aminuddin Baki,  
Kuala Lumpur

## School Advisor

Puan Mardiah binti  
Abdul Latiff

## Meet the Team



Deo, Isha Narissa Kaur



Jia Xuan, Lee



Nanthe Kumar,  
Livvashini



Singam, Shreena  
Alisha

## Achievements

- 5** No. of activities
- 600** Total no. of people reached
- 4** Supporting local organizations
- 80%** Project completion



## Project #1: MRANTI/ Makers Lab Visit

Team BeachBud from SMK Aminuddin Baki visited MRANTI's Makers Lab to learn from innovation experts and find a 3D printing service provider for their prototype, BeachUp. They had productive discussions with MRANTI employees, received valuable feedback, explored the Tinkercad platform for 3D modeling, gained insights into 3D printing materials, and refined the direction of their project with the help of MRANTI's expertise.



**Project Timeline:**  
June 23, 2023

The knowledge gained and connections established during the visit are expected to have a profound impact on the project's development, making it a significant milestone towards project success.

### Key Takeaways:

The visit to MRANTI's Makers Lab proved to be invaluable for Team BeachBud, as it allowed them to achieve their objectives and position their project for success. They expressed gratitude for the warm hospitality and valuable insights shared by the MRANTI team.



## Project #2: "BeachUp" Presentation

Organized by SMK Aminuddin Baki and the Malaysian Young Scientist Organization (MYSO), the event aimed to cultivate a global perspective and enthusiasm for STEM subjects. The team achieved two key accomplishments through their participation in the event. Here, they gained strategies for engaging the audience and delivering easily understandable and informative presentations.



**Project Timeline:**  
August 21 to 25, 2023



### Key Takeaways:

The AJYELN Malaysia Fellows, Team BeachBud, participated in the PBL-STEM Antarabangsa 2023 event in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This gathering brought together young innovators from Malaysia and around the world to present projects addressing real-world challenges and fostering creativity, problem-solving abilities, and curiosity in students.

They also learned how to effectively address inquiries and promote their project to their target audience. Their participation contributed to increasing environmental awareness and youth leadership. By showcasing their dedication to addressing marine plastic pollution and engaging with a diverse audience, they demonstrated their commitment to environmental challenges and fostered innovation and creativity.



# Project #3: Awareness Campaign on Marine Plastic Pollution

**Project Timeline:**  
November 15, 2023

Led by Team BeachBud, the project was launched through Dr. Yasmin Nabilah binti Mohd Fauzee, the AJYELN mentor from Malaysia. She delivered an insightful and informative speech about the impacts of marine plastic pollution. The students found her talk engaging and easy to understand. Following the lecture, a trivia session was held to test the student's knowledge of the topic, and they actively participated and demonstrated their attentiveness. The ad-making competition also fostered creativity and teamwork among the students, with winners being awarded lunchboxes to encourage the use of sustainable products. Overall, the campaign was successful and received positive feedback from the participants.



## Key Takeaways:

The marine plastic pollution campaign led to two outcomes. First, the campaign increased awareness about plastic pollution among students, as demonstrated by their creative ideas for addressing the issue. Secondly, the success of the campaign relied on cooperation and teamwork, with the team leveraging their individual strengths to overcome challenges and setbacks.



# Myanmar



## About the Team

We are committed to increasing the awareness on the dangers of plastic pollution among locals and authorities in our community. Through our project, Stay Aquatic, we aim to share our creative practices to reduce plastic pollution, by organizing school and local clean-ups and educational school events alongside promoting more opportunities for unemployed people through eco-friendly activities.

**School Name:**  
No-2 Basic Education High School, Patheingyi City

**School Advisor**  
Thwe Zin Soe

## Meet the Team



Hnin Wint Htal



Kyi Sin Thant



Min Thant Kyaw



Phoo Pwint Aung

## Achievements

- 4 No. of activities
- 601 Total no. of people reached
- 100% Project completion



# Project #1: Say No to Plastic Competition

**Project Timeline:**  
September 26, 2023

The AJYELN Myanmar fellows, Stay Aquatic, organized the "Say No to Plastic Competition" in Patheingyi, Myanmar, to showcase artworks and terrariums depicting a plastic-free environment. Fifty-eight students participated in the competition, where they were asked to imagine and recreate a plastic-free environment in their terrariums and artworks. The event aimed to ignite students' interest and passion for environmental awareness.



The competition spanned a month, during which the students prepared materials and planned their designs for two weeks before displaying their creations in a one-day exhibit on September 23. Winners were evaluated and announced two days later. The participation rate across different grade levels reflected the enthusiasm and passion of the youth in engaging with environmental issues.

## Key Takeaways:

Through this project, the AJYELN fellows hope that their activities inspire other students to be conscious of environmental issues and participate in future AJYELN events. Stay Aquatic aims to cultivate self-confidence and collaborative skills in students, emphasizing environmental awareness and community engagement as integral parts of their educational activities.

The winners received awards for their creative and unique terrariums, and the students greatly enjoyed the activities, looking forward to future environmental awareness initiatives by Stay Aquatic.



# Project #2: Environmental Plastic Awareness Campaign

**Project Timeline:**  
September 26, 2023

Stay Aquatic, the AJYELN Myanmar fellows, organized the "Environmental Plastic Awareness" campaign at the Pyin-Nyan-Shwe-Yi Hall in Patheingyi. The event aimed to educate 189 secondary school students about the issue of plastic pollution and ignite their passion for the environment.

The team members, including Minn Thant Kyaw, Phoo Pwint Aung, Hnin Wint Htal, and Kyi Sin Thant, played various roles in delivering a thought-provoking presentation, ensuring smooth transitions, managing visual content, and engaging the students through interactive quizzes. After the event, the team conducted a survey with 40 participants to assess the impact of the presentation on their environmental awareness.



## Key Takeaways:

Raising awareness still holds significant value in empowering students to take action against plastic pollution. After the "Environmental Plastic Awareness" talk, some participants noted reduced plastic presence within the school compound, while others expressed that their knowledge had greatly improved.



# Philippines



## About the Team

The Natura Maharlika team consists of 4 fellows from the Ateneo de Davao University Junior High School, namely Angeline Tamisin, Cathrina Abella, Kenji Sai, and Gabriela Corpuz. Natura Maharlika is designed to alleviate the problem of Plastic Pollution in urban areas by turning plastics into school and daily life essentials. This project aims to educate students about the importance of proper segregation, the effects of plastic pollution, and how to transform plastics into usable materials. Our direction is towards building a zero-waste community.

**School Name:**  
Ateneo de Davao University Junior High School

## Meet the Team



Angeline Tamisin



Gabriela Corpuz



Cathrina Abella



Kenji Sai

**School Advisor**  
Sharon Imperial  
and Shane Alfaro

## Achievements

- 4** No. of activities
- 134** Total no. of people reached
- 9** Supporting local organizations
- 100%** Project completion



## Project #1: A Meeting for One Environmental Cause

**Project Timeline:**  
September 27, 2023

The AJYELN Philippines Fellows, Natura Maharlika, organized a meeting with the leaders of various student clubs in the Ateneo de Davao University Junior High School (JHS) Unit. The purpose of the meeting was to foster collaboration and increase environmental awareness regarding the impacts of plastic waste.

Depending on their advocacy and interest, clubs were invited to join the Clean-up Drive, Crafting, or both. During the meeting, Angeline Tamisin, the project leader of Natura Maharlika, presented the project proposal and engaged in discussions with the club moderators. The clubs expressed their support and willingness to provide volunteers and actively promote the Natura Maharlika projects to their constituents.



## Key Takeaways:

The AJYELN fellows recognized the importance of gaining support from more people to create a wider impact with their Natura Maharlika project. Invitation letters were sent to the moderators of different clubs, outlining the collaborative projects, roles of the clubs, schedule for integration, and expected impacts of the project

Through this partnership with other clubs, the AJYELN Philippines fellows aim to engage more students in their school and collaborate with like-minded organizations for a common environmental cause.

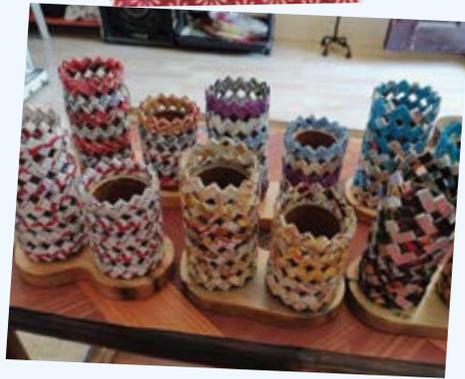
## Project #2: Plastic Upcycling with the Toril Kalamboan Association

Project Timeline:  
October 2, 2023

The AJYELN Natura Maharlika Philippines Fellows attended a workshop on plastic upcycling at the Toril Kalamboan Association in Davao, Philippines. The workshop aimed to develop a sense of passion and commitment towards plastic pollution awareness and enhance the fellows' crafting skills. Led by Ms. Elena Mabano, the head of the association, the workshop emphasized the importance of vision, commitment, and perseverance in repurposing plastic trash.



The fellows learned about the process of cutting, folding, and sewing plastics to create various handicrafts. The workshop provided them with valuable ideas and skills that will be relevant to their next project, which involves assisting students in upcycling plastic waste.



### Key Takeaways:

The exclusive nature of the workshop allowed the fellows to fully immerse themselves in advocating for the plastic pollution problem and gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by environmental advocates. Based on the feedback gathered, the workshop has helped instill a sense of purpose and commitment in the fellows, empowering them to engage more people and increase interest in plastic pollution awareness.



## Project #3: Plastic Upcycling Workshop

Project Timeline:  
October 25, 2023

The AJYELN Philippines Fellows, Natura Maharlika, organized a workshop on plastic upcycling for 78 student members from eight student clubs at Ateneo de Davao University Junior High School. The workshop aimed to increase passion and commitment towards plastic pollution awareness, enhance skills in upcycling, and engage youth in making positive environmental changes.



During the workshop, the participants learned about the upcycling process and developed skills in creating crafts from plastic trash. Led by Nanay Elena from the Toril Kalamboan Association, the students were divided into groups to engage in different parts of the upcycling process, such as folding patterns, cutting, and sewing. The workshop lasted approximately two hours, and each student completed the steps in crafting the upcycled products.



### Key Takeaways:

Natura Maharlika collaborated with the Toril Kalamboan Association, whose resource persons provided valuable expertise and community engagement. The workshop not only increased students' interest and awareness of environmental issues but also helped them develop their skills and utilize their talents for the environment.

Natura Maharlika and Toril Kalamboan Association guided the students in upcycling materials to create wallets and pencil cases. The crafted materials from the upcycling process will be donated to Alon Elementary School in December, April 2024 showcasing the students' commitment to making a positive impact.



GO GREEN



## Project #4: Coastal Clean-up and Waste Brand Audit

**Project Timeline:**  
October 28, 2023

The AJYELN Philippines Fellows, along with student members from eight clubs at Ateneo de Davao University, conducted a coastal clean-up drive at the Matina Aplaya Coastal Area. The activity aimed to increase awareness about plastic pollution and its environmental impact. During the clean-up drive, the participants were divided into groups and provided with waste brand audit kits and sacks for collecting plastic waste. They collected plastic waste for three hours, identifying the type, brand, size, and condition of the collected trash.



### Key Takeaways:

Natura Maharlika Coastal Clean-up not only allowed the participants to experience the effects of plastic consumption and waste on the environment but also raised awareness about the local impact of the plastic pollution crisis. The key findings include increased awareness of plastic pollution among the participants, the importance of conducting waste brand audits to hold companies accountable, and the significance of youth engagement in addressing plastic pollution.

The waste brand audit process aimed to identify the manufacturers of the collected plastic trash and quantify the amount and type of waste produced by each company. The data gathered will be shared with the companies to encourage them to adopt environmentally friendly packaging and waste management practices.



## Singapore



### About the Team

We are a team of passionate young individuals from Singapore, and with Project Reduce Waste, we aim to educate and raise awareness of the effects of plastic pollution in our school. To reduce plastic waste, we aim to reduce the overbuying of plastic food packages in the school cafeteria. Project Reduce Waste will introduce measures to solve plastic pollution in our school, increase students' awareness of alternatives to plastic, and convince students to commit to waste recycling.

#### School Name:

Pei Cai Secondary School

#### School Advisor

James Koh Puay Yang  
and Talisa Khaur Dhaliwal

### Meet the Team



Kua Kai Yi



Ong Hui Ling



Abel Thong Kai En



Tai Yu Xiang

### Achievements

- 1 No. of activities
- 1400 Total no. of people reached
- 100% Project completion

# Project #1: The Plastic Waste Reduction Campaign

The Plastic Waste Reduction Campaign aimed to raise awareness about the harmful effects of plastic pollution and promote sustainable practices among students. The campaign includes various activities and initiatives to engage students and encourage behavior change.

The campaign included two activities and reached the entire school. One of the activities involved giving a speech to the school to introduce the Plastic Waste Reduction Campaign and its objectives.



After implementing the campaign, there was a noticeable reduction in plastic waste produced. This was attributed to the placement of posters near rubbish bins and in the classroom block, which significantly increased readership. Many students read the posters and started incorporating the recommended measures into their daily routines.

## Key Takeaways:

To instill good habits in students in practicing recycling and keeping environment clean. Through this project, we are able to understand more about plastic pollution and its impacts on the environment locally and globally. It takes a communal effort to combat climate change and it starts with the individual and helping them start implementing good practices in their daily routines.

Interviews with peers revealed that the campaign was helpful in encouraging students to practice good habits and understand the effects of plastic pollution. The posters, strategically placed on pillars where students frequently gather, effectively drew their attention and served as constant reminders.

# Thailand



PLANT MORE TREES



## About the Team

Sawasdee Ka (Hello), everyone! I'm Fai, the driving force behind the AJYELN Thailand Team and the founder of the 'We G' project. Focusing on confronting plastic waste, my project targets Chiang Mai University Demonstration School as the starting point of change.

My mission is clear: Inspiring eco-friendly habits through engaging workshops and spirited contests. Join me in reshaping habits and making the world a better place, one step at a time. Together, we'll create a greener future.

School Name:

Chiang Mai University Demonstration School

School Advisor

Pornnapat Mangsungnurn

## Meet the Team



Poonyaporn Intaphrom

## Achievements

- 2 No. of activities
- 50 Total no. of people reached
- 100% Project completion



# Project #1: We G Workshop

**Project Timeline:**  
August 20, 2023

The AJYELN Thailand Fellow conducted the We G Workshop at Chiang Mai University Demonstration School in August. The workshop aimed to raise awareness among students about environmental issues, particularly the challenges posed by plastic bottles. The participants, consisting of 42 students from grades 7 to 12, actively engaged in the workshop and exhibited a comprehensive understanding of environmental issues and the concept of vertical gardens.



## Key Takeaways:

Headed by AJYELN Thailand Team, the workshop garnered positive feedback, rating the workshop as informative and expressing that they had a good time during the workshop. The workshop successfully sparked students' interest and awareness in environmental issues, allowing them to gain a better understanding of the challenges and readily achievable solutions.

The workshop began with an opening speech by Dr. Katrina Navallo, the Programme Manager of AJYELN, who introduced the program and emphasized the importance of collective effort in driving meaningful change. The workshop was facilitated by Ms. Poonyaporn Intaphrom, the AJYELN Thailand Fellow, and supported by staff members responsible for guiding separate groups. The participants were divided into groups and received a lecture on vertical gardens, followed by a hands-on session where they designed and crafted their own vertical gardens using used plastic bottles.



# Project #2 : We G Vertical Garden Awarding Ceremony

**Project Timeline:**  
December 15 to 21, 2023

The AJYELN Thailand Fellow announced the winners of the We G Vertical Garden competition at Chiang Mai University Demonstration School. The competition aimed to instill creativity and initiative among the participating students, emphasizing that small changes can lead to sustainable environmental practices. The winners were officially announced on the organization's Instagram page, and the successful participants were informed about the Awards Ceremony through the LINE Openchat platform.



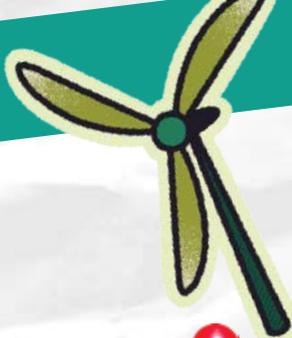
## Key Takeaways:

Creativity is integral to sustainability. The competition allowed participants to share their journey and the small actions of change they implemented by participating in the We G competition. This event provided an opportunity for both participants and judges to gain a better appreciation of environmental concerns and the importance of preserving the world's environmental system.

The top three winners received rewards such as a 1-year Canva Pro membership, buffet coupons, and a waste separation bin. Other successful participants were rewarded with lunch boxes, canteen discount coupons, and plant seeds. The judges used a Google Form to fill in the scores, making it easier to track and analyze the results.



# Viet Nam



## About the Team

Hi everyone, I am Han Tran Bao Chau from Vietnam, representing the AJYELN team "Environment Ambassador." Guiding me are two teachers: Ms. Dao Thi Hien and Ms. Tran Thi Van. I participated in the ASEAN-Japan Young Environment Leaders Network to learn about the creative ways fellow students across the ASEAN region and Japan are protecting the environment. My project aims to raise students' awareness of plastic waste through using comics. We are excited to become a part of AJYELN 2023 and make a positive change within our community!

**School Name:**  
Vinh Phuc High School  
for the Gifted

## Project #1: Comic Books on Plastic Usage and Minimize Plastic Waste

**Project Timeline:**  
October 14, 2023

The project focused on raising awareness of plastic usage and minimizing plastic waste through comic books for junior high school students in Yen Lac district, Vinh Phuc province. The team was selected to participate in the ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network 2023 training program. They created a comic book called "The Global Adventure" that tells the story of 4 plastic bottles and teaches students about reducing plastic waste pollution.



The comic book was printed and distributed to schools, where students actively discussed solutions to reduce plastic waste. The project also included book donations to school libraries and activities such as collecting used plastic bottles and recycling plastic bottle caps into useful items. Besides the comic books, book donations and recycling initiatives also became important parts of the overall project.

## Meet the Team

**School Advisor**  
Dao Thi Hien and  
Tran Thi Van



Han Tran Bao Cha



## Achievements

- 3** No. of activities
- 2393** Total no. of people reached
- 100%** Project completion



**Key Takeaways:**  
AJYELN Vietnam recognizes that the project has been positively received by students. Awareness of the dangers of plastic waste to life and the environment has increased. There have been initial improvements in students' environmental protection behavior in schools. However, to achieve the desired effectiveness and expansion of the project, we believe that more time is needed. Propaganda efforts need to continue regularly, especially with the active contribution of students in creating more engaging comic books.



# Project #1: Exchanging Used Plastic

On November 11th and 12th, 2023, at Trung Nguyen Secondary School, with the help of volunteers from Vinh Phuc High School for the gifted and Trung Nguyen Secondary School, AJYELN Vietnam implemented the "Exchange used plastic bottles for gifts" program to help students raise awareness of reducing plastic waste at school and in their living areas.



## Key Takeaways:

The habit of bringing food to school in plastic boxes, bags, and bottles has decreased. The use of plastic bags to cover books and single-use plastic bottles has decreased significantly, especially since the use of single-use plastic bottles has dropped sharply. However, the use of plastic study materials hasn't changed much, indicating the necessity for alternative environmentally friendly materials to change students' behavior.

The activity attracted many students, and many used plastic bottles were collected.

AJYELN Vietnam organized sessions to guide students on recycling collected plastic bottle caps into useful items such as trash bins, watering cans, flower pots, etc. This helps students develop awareness of prolonging the lifespan of plastic bottles to minimize environmental pollution.

After a short period of being guided, the students took advantage of used plastic bottles to create pots and "green walls"

In January 2024, AJYELN Vietnam guided 8th and 9th graders at some secondary schools to establish environmental protection clubs and instructed them on how to plan and organize activities.



# Fellows' Feedback

## Brunei Darussalam



"AJYELN provided an enjoyable opportunity to collaborate with friends on environmental issues. Witnessing the impact in the community was rewarding and has fostered my personal growth."

*Nurul Afiqah Binti Hasnan*

"AJYELN boosted my confidence to discuss this issue with my community and sparked creative solutions. Understanding the dangers of plastic, especially in our oceans, inspired me to explore ways to reuse and repurpose it."

*Nur Alyaa Hafezah binti Rizal*

"AJYELN has really been the most fun, unique and fascinating program! It provided me with the opportunity to discover remarkable ideas of individuals from ASEAN-Japan; both fellows and mentors."

*Avni binti Ahmad Aidil Aliyusah*

"Connecting with AJYELN members was an enriching experience. Initially, my environmental project experience was limited, making brainstorming a challenge. But the support from my teammates had helped to overcome it, and we created a great project together!"

*Nurafiqah Musfirah*

"AJYELN taught me well how to be a "Better Leader" and how to communicate well. I enjoyed working with my supportive mentor and team members to solve problems and plan activities. I also liked raising awareness about environmental issues and doing practical projects in my community."

*Laychhoung Heng*

"As a student, AJYELN offers a new experience to organize project; awareness campaigns and environmental activities, which requires me to take on more responsibility to ensure the projects succeed."

*Heng Sieng*

"I enjoyed how the speaker shared their experiences with the challenges they've faced and how to identify problems and solutions, as well as managing financial issues. It was fantastic as it allowed us to get to know each other better from different countries in the breakout rooms."

*Sreynit Duong*

"AJYELN provides the benefit of having a mentor located in our country and a coordinator in Japan, both of whom offer valuable support to our team. We also equipped with training session prior to initiating projects in our country."

*Meaneat Ny*

## Cambodia



## Indonesia



"I loved being an AJYELN fellow! I loved the opportunity to connect and collaborate with fellows from different backgrounds and cultures. It has broadened my horizons and learned tons from their unique perspectives!"

*Nadia Avlia*

"AJYELN has been instrumental in equipping me with valuable skills and knowledge through its workshops and training sessions. These skills have not only enhanced my professional capabilities but also empowered me to take on new challenges and pursue my goals with confidence."

*Susila Lestari*

"AJYELN has provided me with a strong support network. The program connected me with mentors who have guided and mentored me throughout my journey. Their expertise and guidance have been instrumental in my personal and professional growth."

*Kendra Jovita Amadea*

"AJYELN has opened doors of opportunities. We're able to connect with professionals across diverse fields and industries. This has provided access to resources and platforms, allowing me to showcase my skills and accomplishments."

*Muliara Sakila*

"I was able to learn more about the waste problem in my community and take proactive action to solve the problem. It was a wonderful experience and a must-to-be-part program for youth."

*Nadeshiko Akita*

"I particularly appreciate that they collaborate with us to develop practical strategies for implementing the solutions to the issues we've identified."

*Yayoi Nagashima*

## Japan



## Lao PDR



"AJYELN program provides us with the opportunity to contribute to creating a cleaner and greener community. It also encourages youth to share their perspectives on the issue. I see this initiative as a fantastic opportunity to engage people in various activities supported by ASEAN and Japan."

*Thipmala Keonammavong*

"I've found great joy in collaborating within teams on various projects to contribute their creative solutions to environmental challenges. Engaging in these activities has enriched my knowledge and skills, particularly in project planning and leadership, granting me greater responsibility in project completion."

*Alisia Saphakdy*

"One aspect of AJYELN that stands out to me is the teamwork involved in improving the cleanliness of our school. Seeing the school become neater, cleaner, and more orderly fills me with pride and delight."

*Vankham Sibounthan*

"I appreciate the opportunity to collaborate and brainstorm ideas for creating environmental benefits and implementing them independently. It's reassuring to know that I have the support of the ASEAN-JAPAN Centre and the AJYELN Program as I work on my project."

*Phyraphol Pholsena*

## Malaysia

"AJYELN has equipped me with valuable skills, including event planning, team coordination, and a heightened awareness of environmental issues. It gives us freedom to make an impact on our targeted audience through our own ways (that we find best)."

*Shreena Alisha Singam*

"I found the mentor-mentee system enjoyable and appreciated how we raised awareness through campaign organization, which was truly exciting. The experience taught me not just to plan but also to execute effectively."

*Lee Jia Xuan*

"AJYELN instilled the belief that youth can indeed make a meaningful impact in the world, regardless of its scale. AJYELN also helped me to change my mindset to believe that anything is possible if you put your mind to it."

*Isha Narissa Kaur Deo*

"AJYELN transform dreams into reality by offering opportunities to youth with bright ideas. AJYELN also taught me the importance of collective effort, pushing us to strive and work harder for improved outcomes."

*Livvashini Nanthe Kumar*



"Being able to communicate with other youths on addressing the global problems"

*Hnin Wint Htal*

"One of the most innovative experience offered yet for Patheon students."

*Minn Thant Kyaw*

"First of all, I'm very happy that I had the opportunity to participate in AJYELN program. What I like most about this program is that this helps teenagers like us to upgrade our leadership skills and of course, to get to know more about the environment."

*Kyi Sin Thant*

"I like how this program helps teens become better leaders. But, getting everyone in the community involved in solving environmental issues through AJYELN is tough. Even after workshops, some people still do harmful things to the environment. It shows we need better ways to teach and reach out to make lasting changes."

*Phoo Pwint Aung*

## Philippines

"One of the most rewarding aspects of being an AJYELN fellow is being seen as an inspiration for environmental advocacy among my schoolmates. Undertaking a big project like this for the first time has been quite challenging. I've had to carefully think and plan every step of our project to ensure its success. It's important to me that everyone gets involved in our activities and learns as much as they can from our efforts."

*Angeline Noreen Tamisin*

"Partnering with another organization to enable the upcycling of plastics was a significant achievement for our team. However, one of the challenges we encountered was brainstorming creative ways to grab people's attention with our project. I'm eager to collaborate and communicate with teams from other countries as well."

*Kenji Matthew Sai*

"What I enjoyed about this program is that it allowed me to develop as a student leader - not only as an environmental leader but as a leader overall. Not only this, but it allowed me to get in touch with different people with different backgrounds and experiences, and it helped me learn much from them as well."

*Gabriela Corpuz*

## Myanmar



"AJYELN has helped me grow so much in personal, interpersonal, and professional areas. I feel that I'm one step closer to being an adult. I'm very blessed for this rare opportunity to be a part of the program. I hope the program will grow bigger and wider!"

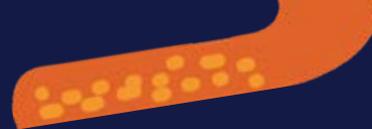
*Poonyaporn Intaphrom (Fai)*

## Thailand

## Vietnam

"AJYELN improved my ability to inform audiences, develop activity plans, and mobilize participants to execute these plans effectively. I also can make friends with other creative, dynamic fellows and acquire more projects related to the environment."

*Han Tran Bao Chau*



# Reflections

We asked the AJYELN fellows to share the challenges they faced and lessons learned in managing and implementing their environmental projects.

The path of a youth environmental leader is not an easy one. Through their experience as an AJYELN fellow, we asked how this has shaped their understanding of what it means to lead others towards an environmental cause, and how these can influence their future environmental advocacies and journeys.

## Brunei Darussalam



### Time management amidst a busy academic calendar.

Throughout the implementation of our activities, we encountered challenges such as time constraints arising from busy study schedules and conflicting school programs. Coordinating with team members for activity planning was hindered by these scheduling conflicts while organizing activities outside of school necessitated obtaining parental permission for participating students. Despite these obstacles, we successfully conducted our activities, often overcoming last-minute challenges.

To address these challenges, we prioritized efficient time management by scheduling our activities well in advance and selecting suitable dates considering both students' and our own busy schedules.

In instances where in-person planning was impractical, we utilized online tools or adjusted our schedules accordingly. For student participation in external activities, we diligently provided permission letters to be shared with parents, ensuring proper consent.

Seeking guidance from our supervisor teacher and mentor proved instrumental in addressing complex issues and generating valuable ideas. The environmental project imparted important lessons in time management, consideration of participant availability, and the significance of seeking mentorship for effective project execution. Sharing our challenges with mentors fostered an open-minded approach and provided us with novel strategies to enhance our project management capabilities.

During the AJYELN program, we recognized the transformative power of sharing our experiences to inspire others to engage in environmental stewardship. Through our participation, we gained a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding environmental issues and reaffirmed our commitment to mitigating their impact through awareness-raising activities. Understanding the imperative of our actions, we remain steadfast in our resolve to continue these efforts, recognizing that our collective action is essential in addressing environmental challenges effectively.

## Cambodia



### Flexibility and adaptability are key to successful project implementation

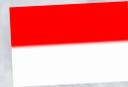
During the implementation of our activities, we encountered several challenges. Firstly, the initial date we set for implementation coincided with our national exam, so we had to change the date to ensure we could prioritize our studies. Additionally, we faced rejection from two schools where we initially planned to conduct our activities. However, we overcame this obstacle by choosing another school where one of our team members studied, making the process easier.

Through this experience, we learned valuable lessons about managing and implementing environmental projects. We realized the importance of being flexible and adaptable, as things rarely go exactly according to plan. It is crucial to develop a detailed plan that includes a timeline, budget, resources, and tasks to ensure a smooth implementation.

Participating as AJYELN fellows has transformed our perspective on youth leadership and environmental issues. The program has provided us with opportunities to enhance our leadership skills through workshops, training sessions, and project work. We now believe that we have the power to influence and change people's lifestyles to positively impact the environment. These experiences have also helped us develop essential leadership skills such as communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and critical thinking.



# Indonesia



## Seeking collaboration with local communities increased our project impact

During the clean-up event, we faced challenges due to limited resources and logistical constraints. To overcome these challenges, we sought local sponsorships and worked closely with community leaders to secure the necessary resources. This experience taught us the significance of adaptability and collaboration when executing environmental projects with limited resources. Our participation in AJYELN has reshaped our perspectives on youth leadership, emphasizing the potential for impactful initiatives in addressing environmental issues.



# Japan



## Thorough planning and preparation to anticipate challenges and setback

During the implementation of our activities, we faced two main challenges: lack of participation and scheduling conflicts. To overcome these challenges, we expanded our outreach by contacting more schools and utilizing volunteer websites to advertise the event. We also strategically planned the event by first determining a date and then working backward to create a rough schedule.

Through managing and implementing our environmental project, we learned the importance of creating a comprehensive schedule and considering contingency plans in case of unexpected obstacles. We realized that even students can take action to address environmental problems and that raising awareness and individual interest is crucial. Additionally, we understood the significance of collaboration and the support of others in executing successful projects.

Our participation as AJYELN fellows has transformed our perspective on youth leadership and environmental issues. We now recognize that everyone, regardless of age, can contribute to solving environmental problems. We also understand the value of collective action and cooperation in creating impactful projects.



Lao PDR



### Time management and resource allocation

During the implementation of our activities, we encountered several challenges. Firstly, our team members' schedules did not align as they were in different rooms, making it difficult to find common free time. Additionally, allocating time for the project amidst studying, exams, and other activities proved to be a challenge. Moreover, the lack of facilities made it challenging to conduct activities outside.

To overcome these challenges, we made efforts to allocate work time in advance, allowing us to organize activities together during our free time. We utilized our free time after school to discuss and plan activities, seeking permission from teachers to organize activities during class time. The support from our school was instrumental in overcoming these challenges. However, due to limited project work time and difficulties in managing it properly, we had to eliminate planned activities outside of school.

Managing and implementing our environmental project taught us key lessons. Thorough planning, stakeholder engagement, resource allocation, monitoring, flexibility, and a commitment to

sustainability are essential for successful project management.

Participating in the AJYELN program has profoundly changed our perspectives on youth leadership and environmental issues. It has equipped us with leadership and teamwork skills, enabling us to be influential leaders in our community. The program has shown us that even as young individuals, we can initiate and drive change.

We have become more aware of the environmental challenges our countries, ASEAN, and Japan face, and we recognize the need for urgent collective action. Through initiatives like the Awareness Campaign on Waste Separation and the Presentation Competition "Reducing Plastic Waste in My Classroom," we have learned that small actions can lead to significant changes. The AJYELN program has not only provided us with the necessary tools and skills for effective leadership but also instilled in us a strong commitment to environmental conservation.



Malaysia



### Anticipatory planning and continuous action

One of the challenges we encountered was trying to host an educational campaign for our school-age—teenagers. We were struggling to find ways to engage our target audience. Other than that, we also had a little trouble finding the right people to help us implement our project, BeachUp, a machine that filters sand from trash.

We took our time to brainstorm ways to engage our audience and managed to come up with a few interesting ideas. At the end of the day, we managed to convey our message to the targeted audience. Also, Miss Yasmin, our mentor, worked tirelessly to reach out to her connections and managed to help us find people who could help our project implementation.

We learned that it takes meticulous planning and continuous action to implement and ensure the success of our environmental project. These things, alongside cooperation and respecting time, were very much needed during our project. In addition, we learned that teamwork makes the dream work

and without having relatable and committed members, nothing would have gotten done. AJYELN has truly changed our thinking about these problems by broadening our previously narrow perspectives and encouraging us to research deeper on the roots of these problems.

By understanding the cause and effects of environmental issues, we managed to make a difference and see a change, however slight, during our implementation. For example, through our awareness campaign on marine plastic pollution, we can now see the students of our school being more mindful of what they throw and use every day.



# Myanmar



## Communication and collective action

During the implementation, we encountered certain challenges. The project-related conditions were not widely familiar to the local community of Patheingyi, especially academic institutions.

The active campaign may have been foreign to the environment we were working in. Date of implementation and appointment: The promised deadlines for the campaign progress report, financial record, and mentor appointments were disrupted by academic circumstances, including the national examination.

To overcome these challenges, we coordinated with our principal and mentor to consult on the active campaign. We also cultivated mutual understanding with other academic professionals in our institution. We ensured that other fellows were well-informed about our dilemma and rearranged the dates to minimize the gap between the

promised implementation and appointment dates. The lessons that we learned from the project include the importance of informative and collective action and events. Team spirit is critical, as well as being transparent in sharing ideas and assumptions throughout the process.

AJYELN has provided a new perspective and reflection for Burmese local youth, fueling our passion and fostering maturity. It has enabled us to adapt to a better lifestyle and become conductors for environmental preservation in our school community.



# Philippines



## Stakeholder coordination and seeking guidance

Throughout the implementation of our activities, we encountered challenges such as time constraints arising from busy study schedules and conflicting school programs. Coordinating with team members for activity planning was hindered by these scheduling conflicts while organizing activities outside of school necessitated obtaining parental permission for participating students. Despite these obstacles, we successfully conducted our activities, often overcoming last-minute challenges.

To address these challenges, we prioritized efficient time management by scheduling our activities well in advance and selecting suitable dates considering both students' and our own busy schedules. In instances where in-person planning was impractical, we utilized online tools or adjusted our schedules accordingly. For student participation in external activities, we diligently provided permission letters to be shared with parents, ensuring proper consent.

Seeking guidance from our supervisor teacher and mentor proved instrumental in addressing complex issues and generating valuable ideas. The environmental project imparted important lessons in time management, consideration of participant availability, and the significance of seeking mentorship for effective project execution. Sharing our challenges with mentors fostered an open-minded approach and provided us with novel strategies to enhance our project management capabilities.

During the AJYELN program, we recognized the transformative power of sharing our experiences to inspire others to engage in environmental stewardship. Through our participation, we gained a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding environmental issues and reaffirmed our commitment to mitigating their impact through awareness-raising activities. Understanding the imperative of our actions, we remain steadfast in our resolve to continue these efforts, recognizing that our collective action is essential in addressing environmental challenges effectively.



# Thailand



The main challenge I faced during our activities was handling all tasks alone as the sole team member. It was tough juggling various responsibilities such as budgeting, tracking progress, implementing plans, communicating with stakeholders, and writing reports by myself. I often felt overwhelmed by the workload, and not having someone to bounce ideas off made decision-making more difficult.

I must admit that overcoming the challenge of working alone was quite a journey, but it taught me some valuable lessons. It made me realize the importance of teamwork. Whenever I felt overwhelmed, I found it helpful to talk things through with my mentor. Just having someone to share my concerns with and seek advice from helped me regain my focus and manage stress better. I also found that taking breaks and doing activities I enjoy helped me recharge and approach my work with a clearer mind.

Throughout implementing our environmental project, with the invaluable support from AJYELN and AJC, I learned some important lessons. Firstly, I learned the importance of resilience. Unexpected obstacles may arise, and unforeseen encounters may test your resolve, but perseverance ultimately leads to success. Secondly, I realized the necessity of establishing a well-organized working system and timetable. This not only enhances productivity but also ensures a healthy work-life balance.

As a student juggling various commitments, effective time management is essential for pursuing my goals. Lastly, managing the project's Instagram account and benefiting from the insights provided by AJC helped me enhance my content creation skills. These experiences have not only enriched my understanding of project management but also equipped me with practical skills for future endeavors.

Participating as an AJYELN fellow has significantly reshaped my views on youth leadership and environmental issues. In terms of leadership, I've undergone a mindset shift, particularly regarding teamwork and time management. Previously, I was quite confident in working solo and had doubts about collaborating with others. However, through AJYELN, I've learned the importance of teamwork and the benefits of having supportive colleagues.

Regarding environmental issues, my involvement has exposed me to the aspirations of fellow youth from diverse backgrounds. This collective optimism has instilled in me a sense of hope for the future. It reinforces my conviction that, despite the obstacles, concerted efforts can lead to a more sustainable future for all.



# Vietnam



Thanks to the project, I realized that project planning is very important. It is necessary to determine the correct goals to build an appropriate plan. However, during the implementation process, there needs to be flexibility in adjusting the plan to suit actual conditions.

To carry out the project well, it is also necessary to call for support and financial contributions from various parties, which will help us facilitate project implementation.

Previously, I believed that if everyone had personal awareness of environmental protection, it would lead to a better environment. However, the reality is that many individuals are indifferent to their own living environment, resulting in the current environmental pollution situation.

Through my participation as a member of AJYELN, my perspective has shifted. I now understand that educational influence on consciousness, particularly starting from a young age, requires creating movements to encourage involvement. Gradually, people will develop consistent awareness.

During the organization and implementation of the project, I observed that students are quick-witted in grasping issues, and behavior change is easier compared to older individuals. Students have many innovative ideas and new perspectives that fuel the movement and expansion. However, clear organization and task assignments are necessary to achieve effectiveness as students lack experience and struggle to take initiative in their tasks.





# 2024 AJYELN Applications Now Open!

## How to Apply:



Scan the QR code to Register!

### Application Period:

January 15, 2024 to March 31, 2024

Complete your application and don't forget to submit all required documents!

Don't miss out on this incredible opportunity! Apply now and let your journey with AJYELN begin. #JoinUs #ApplyNow #AJC #AJYELN

## Are you ready to embark on a journey with us?

We are on the lookout for young individuals to champion this year's project theme: "Empowering the youth in tackling marine plastic waste in ASEAN and Japan"

### Why Join Us?

- Receive seed money to implement your dream environmental project!
- Connect with like-minded individuals on an international scale.
- Receive guidance from designated mentors for each team.
- Enhance your leadership and management skills through professional training.

### Who we're seeking:

- A team of 2-4 members aged between 15-18 years, with an appointed supervisor
- Originate from and reside in ASEAN member states or Japan
- Possess proficiency in conversational English
- Exhibit a strong interest or background in environmental and social engagement work

Follow us for real-time updates



@AJYELN



@AJYELN

