GROUNDED IN PURPOSE

30 Years of Building Impact through Social Entrepreneurship

FSSI growing community enterprises

30 GROUNDED IN PURPOSE

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This newsletter was published in celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Foundation for a Sustainable Society, Inc. (FSSI). It highlights key milestones, stories, and the ongoing work of supporting social enterprises across the Philippines.

You may scan the QR code to access the digital version and visit the special anniversary webpage for more stories and updates.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Grounded in Purpose: 30 Years of Building Impact through Social Entrepreneurship

On September 6, 2025, we mark the 30th anniversary of the Foundation for a Sustainable Society, Inc. (FSSI).

We are filled with gratitude for the incredible journey that began with a visionary idea. FSSI's roots are firmly planted in a historic act of international solidarity — a debt-for-development swap between the governments of the Philippines and Switzerland birthed from the advocacy of Swiss and Philippine civil society organizations, and which transformed a financial obligation into an opportunity for development. What followed was a strong commitment: to build a fund that would serve marginalized communities, support sustainable development, and champion enterprises that place people, planet, and profit at the heart of their work. Thirty years later, that commitment stands strong.

Over the years, FSSI has become an enduring and purpose-driven institution. Guided by the triple bottom line (3BL), we have supported over 300 social enterprises across the country, channeling more than Php 2.5 billion in investments. Through careful and innovative strategies, we have grown the original Php 455 million endowment entrusted to us, into a fund worth one billion pesos as of 2025.

But this is not only about sound financial management. The social enterprises that have worked with FSSI reflect not just gains in income or employment, but also restored hope, stronger communities, and the growing possibility for people, often underserved and unbankable, to uplift their own lives.

We thank the partners who trusted us and the communities who continue to inspire our mission.

We chose the theme "Grounded in Purpose" to reflect what has always anchored us: our mission to create lasting and transformative positive change. In a world shaped by uncertainty, FSSI has remained, evolving, learning, but always grounded in the belief that development must be just, inclusive, and sustainable.

This milestone is also a moment to look ahead. With the launch of our new Strategic Plan 2025 to 2029, we renew our focus on enabling social enterprises to thrive, particularly those who need support the most. We remain committed to providing financial tools, capacity building opportunities, and partnerships that nurture social entrepreneurs as agents of transformation in their communities.

To all our partners, members, past and present leaders and staff, fellow social enterprise advocates, and friends — thank you. This celebration belongs to you as much as it does to the Foundation. Let us carry this legacy forward with the same clarity of purpose that brought us here.

Here's to the next decade of investing in change, one social enterprise at a time.

Nestor Carbonera
Chairperson
Foundation for a Sustainable Society, Inc. (FSSI)

HISTORY

Vision

Empowered communities upholding social justice, respecting integrity of creation, and realizing fullness of life

Mission

Invest in social enterprises by growing bottom lines for people, planet, and profit

Our Beginnings

On 6 September 1995, the Foundation for a Sustainable Society, Inc. (FSSI) was established following a successful debt-for-development agreement between the Philippine Government and the Swiss Confederation which resulted from the advocacy of Swiss and Philippine civil society organizations.

Switzerland cancelled the Philippines' outstanding export credit debt amounting to 42 million Swiss Francs. A counterpart fund equivalent to half of this amount (454.8 million pesos) was put up and channeled to FSSI to finance sustainable development projects for marginalized sectors.

FSSI seeks to apply innovative fund utilization that will maximize both social and financial returns through valuable entrepreneurship and, at the same time, ensure continued growth for the institution, as well as equitable development and environmental sustainability in all our initiatives.

We promote the triple bottom line or "3BL", a term derived from the United Nation's three pillars of sustainability –environmental protection, economic development, and social equity.

These were later referred to as three P's – the triple bottom lines of People, Planet, and Profit.

Our Member Organizations

FSSI is governed and supported by its membership of 17 national and sub-national networks of civil society organizations (CSOs). FSSI's membership broadens its reach and provides a rich pool of resources for its work.

- Alliance of Philippine Partners in Enterprise Development (APPEND)
- Association of Foundations (AF)
- Federation of Peoples' Sustainable Development Cooperative (FPSDC)
- Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC)
- MASS-SPECC Cooperative Development Center (MASS-SPECC)
- Mindanao Coalition of Development NGO Networks (MINCODE)
- National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATCCO)
- National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP)
- National Council of Social Development Foundation of the Philippines (NCSD)
- Caritas Philippines/ National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA)
- Philippine Cooperative Central Fund Federation (PCF)
- Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies (PHILSSA)
- Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP)
- Partnership for Clean Air (PCA)
- Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA)
- VICTO National Cooperative Federation and Development Center (VICTO National)
- WAND Women Organization, Inc. (WAND)

Founding Members

1. Association of Foundations (AF)
2. Convergence for Community-Centered Area Development
3. Ecumenical Development Association of the Philippines
4. Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC)
5. Green Forum
6. Grupo ng Lakas ng Kababaihan (G10)
7. Magbasa Kita Foundation
8. National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATCCO)
9. National Council for Social Development (NCSD)
10. National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP)
11. National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA)
12. NGO Center for Cooperative Development (NGO-CCD)
13. Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies (PHILSSA)
14. Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP)
15. Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA)
16. Swiss Association for International Cooperation (Helvetas)
17. Swiss Contact
18. Swiss Interchurch Aid (HEKS)
19. Women's Action Network for Development (WAND)

MILESTONES

Building a Legacy of Impact

Our milestones from 1995 to 2025

1995

The Foundation for a Sustainable Society, Inc. (FSSI) was established through a landmark debt for development swap between the Philippines and Switzerland.

1996 - 2000

FSSI begins operations, issuing its first loans and guarantees to social enterprises in underserved, unbanked communities, and develops its triple bottom line approach for sustainable, inclusive impact strategies.

Early 2000s

- FSSI expands its reach with the launch of a grants facility for community-based sustainable enterprises and adopts its first Medium-Term Development Plan focusing on areas such as microfinance, coconut coir, and solid waste management.
- FSSI introduces its first official logo and website to strengthen its identity and communication with partners.

FOUNDATION for a SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

Mid 2000s

- Environmental sustainability is further embedded through the creation of an environmental management accounting system and the adoption of an environmental policy to guide partnerships.
- A refreshed brand identity is introduced to reflect synergy, collaboration, and sustainability.

2010s

- FSSI adopts the 2011–2016 Medium-Term Development Plan, shifting to a focus area-based strategy and introduces the 3BL Local Economy and Ecosystem Development (LED) framework.
- FSSI strengthens its role in social enterprise advocacy, co-convening the Poverty Reduction through Social Entrepreneurship (PRESENT) Coalition.
- FSSI celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2015, doubling its original endowment and supporting around 200 partners.

Late 2010s

- FSSI promotes the integration of social enterprise goals into the national development agenda.
- The 2017–2019 Medium-Term Plan focuses on deepening 3BL outcomes through SE consortiums and inclusive value chains.

2020 - 2024

- Under its 2020–2024 Strategic Plan, FSSI makes significant strides in portfolio and partner service quality, despite COVID-19 pandemic-related challenges.
- FSSI publishes its 25th Anniversary Book, documenting its history and impact.
- FSSI starts its Investing in Women program, with the support of the Australian government.
- The endowment fund reaches the Php 1 billion mark — a milestone in financial stewardship.

2025

- FSSI surpasses Php 2.5 billion in cumulative investments, supporting over 300 social enterprises.
- With the launch of its 2025–2029 Strategic Plan, FSSI renews its commitment to underserved communities and places greater emphasis on supporting agriculture-based and women-led social enterprises.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025 - 2029

STORIES FROM THE GROUND

Thank you Foundation for a Sustainable Society, Inc., for this huge opportunity to be one of your enterprise partners. We started as a small enterprise and we are now growing because of your support.

- Engr. Jaime "Jim" Avila Ill,
JMJ Solar Proprietor

FSSI has a good financing facility, provides technical assistance, and has a strong network in the Philippines. I can grow with FSSI because we have shared goals.

- November Canieso-Yeo,
Plantsville Health Products Founder

The financial assistance received from FSSI was specifically used for its intended purpose. In fact, the store has now flourished.

- Catalino "Cata" Obinario Jr.,
Cooperative Enterprise for True Economic Reform (CENTER)
Chairperson

Our Advocacy
The Triple Bottom Line

FSSI practices and promotes the triple bottom line or "3BL", a term derived from the United Nation's three pillars of sustainability - environmental protection, economic development, and social equity. These were later referred to as three P's- the triple bottom lines (3BL) of People, Planet, and Profit.

FSSI adopts the 3BL as a strategy to support social enterprises achieve and maintain financial sustainability while intentionally improving the lives of people and taking care of the environment.

People

The participation of marginalized sectors in social enterprises and value chains and the improvement of their well-being

Planet

The sustainable management of ecosystems, including climate change adaptation, mitigation, and disaster risk reduction mechanisms

Profit

The economic sustainability of social enterprises and local value chains.

FSSI SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AWARDS

The FSSI 3BL Social Enterprise Awards is a milestone initiative by the Foundation for a Sustainable Society, Inc. (FSSI) in celebration of its 30th founding anniversary in 2025. These awards recognize FSSI's partner social enterprises that demonstrate excellence in implementing the Triple Bottom Line (3BL) strategy—empowering People, protecting the Planet, and driving Purposeful Profit.

What sets the 3BL SE Awards apart is that they are presented by FSSI, a social impact investor with an active partnership with the awardees. These are not one-off recognitions but a celebration of shared journeys, collaboration, and transformation.

Divided into Achievement, Excellence, and Special Awards, the program encourages broader adoption of the 3BL approach. The first awardees were honored during FSSI's Anniversary Dinner on September 5, 2025.

3BL SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AWARDS
For People, Planet, and Profit

Achievement Awardees

Our Leadership

NESTOR CARBONERA, PHILDHRRA
Chairperson

OMAN JIAO, AF
Vice Chairperson

JOE DETABLAN, VICTO National Secretary

OYEN DOROTAN, WAND Women Organization Treasurer

EDIL GUYANO, Caritas/NASSA
Auditor

AGNES BOLANOS, MINCODE
Member

NADETTE TOLEDO, MASS-SPECC
Member

USEC. JOVEN BALBOSA, DOF
Ex-officio member

ATTY. ALEX ENRIQUEZ
Asst. Corporate Secretary

Our People

Sixto Donato C. Macasaet, Executive Director
Jerome Ignacio, Assistant Director for Development Services
Nezar Viernes, Project Development Manager
Carmela Porras, Project Officer
Caroline Cepeda, Project Development Assistant
Ednie Luceño-Casiller, Partnership Manager
Lito Ignacio Villar, Assistant Project Manager
Sherwin Celestino, Project Officer
Ma. Leah Marissa Embuido, Financial Services Manager
Mark Andre Tañedo, Credit Officer
Anne Marie Lou Rivera, Financial Services Assistant
Markus Rico, Remedial Officer
Jomil Salon, Finance Manager
Juliana Gadiano, Finance Officer
Raquel Mogol, Bookkeeper
Enerisa Lascano, Cashier
Ros Velasco, Knowledge Management, Advocacy, and Communications (KMAC) Manager
Nikkily Natan, KMAC Officer
Joseph Franco Febre, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
Marian Doreen Erasga, HR & Administration Manager
Mia Cristina Dionisio, HR Assistant
Yolanda Larin, Administration Assistant
Reymund Alimpuangon, Messenger/Utility

FSSI growing community enterprises

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Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/user/3bottomlines