



Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs Community Action Guide

Activating Citizens for Collective Action to Create Social Change



A Publication By
A Good Space Co-operative Limited

Contributors

Vincent Ng , Adriale Pang , Vaishnavi Kannan , Ervin Ong

Foreword By

Anthea Ong , Michael Cheah

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Activating Citizens for Collective Action to Create Social Change

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Contributing Authors	Pang Ren Jie, Adriale, Vaishnavi Kannan, Daniel Tay Choon Lim
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It takes a village to raise a child and we think the same can be said for a community and collective action. We have come a long way, on the back of inputs, friendships, advice and contributions from many unsung heroes and key partners. Here is a special mention for the people and organisations who contributed most to helping us bring the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs to life. A more detailed list can be found in the Appendix.

Organisations



National Council of Social Service

We are grateful to NCSS for organising the Collective Impact Webinar Series, which helped us to learn about the Collective Impact approach and adapt it into our design of the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs.

NCSS also subsequently subsidised the costs of our coaching sessions with Tamarack Institute, who guided us to design the Listening Living Labs process. Special thanks to Elaine, Director of Service Strategy & Innovation and Capability Funding, Whee Peng, Joseph, Dilys, Sharleen and Marceline for their support of us throughout the years.



Tamarack Institute

We are grateful to Tamarack Institute for their mentorship and generosity in sharing their experiences in collective impact with us over the past 1.5 years. The insights and tools that Paul and Sylvia shared over our 8am Zoom calls were instrumental in aiding us to design the different workshops, the Listening Living Labs process and identifying key reflections to be documented in this guide.



U.S. Embassy Singapore

We are grateful to the US Embassy in Singapore, Ian and Alison for supporting Phase 3 of the Listening Living Labs through their Alumni Community Project Fund (ACPF) 2022 which they awarded to Anthea. This gave us the necessary resources to continue on the Secretariat Team's work, provide a small prototyping grant for the work-groups, and organise a Finale event to complete Phase 3.



HealthServe

We are grateful to HealthServe for their unwavering support of the Listening Living Labs. Michael, their former Executive Director, served as the Co-Chair of the Leaders Roundtable and provided us with many valuable insights that were pivotal to shaping the direction of the collective.



Ministry of Manpower

We are grateful to many officers within the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) for their support over the last 18 months of our journey, whether it was giving feedback on the work-groups' ideas, sharing data on existing policies or helping to connect us to other stakeholders. In particular, we are grateful for Shu Xiang, Azrina, Yi Ling, Nicholas, Ming En, Eunice, Angie, Serene, Yuan Xiang and Yvonne.



Migrant Workers Centre

A chance meeting with Devona at a migrant workers' cricket tournament helped us to learn about the challenges faced by migrant workers whose companies had gone bust and are urgently seeking a job to stay in Singapore; many whom are staying at temporary shelters provided by Migrant Workers Centre. This eventually led to Team Good Company conducting a CV workshop for workers and learning that perhaps the best recipient for this CV is not potential employers but the employment agent who is helping workers to look for jobs. We are grateful to Devona, Dhipan, Francis and Farhana for their support, without which a prototype would not have been possible.



Association of Employment Agencies

We are grateful to Ms K. Jayaprema, President of AEAS, for sharing her insights into the recruitment process of a domestic worker and how to pitch the recommendation of enabling a domestic worker to view the hiring history of her potential employer. AEAS also helped to disseminate Team History Buff's survey to their network of employment agents, eventually resulting in the collection of 49 responses, none of which would have been possible if not for their help.



The Majority Trust

We are grateful to the team at TMT for constantly finding innovative ways to support social impact organisations. We learnt a lot about social inclusion of migrant workers from the Building Bridges report which they had commissioned in 2021 and that helped us in scoping the eventual focus areas for the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs. The Scaffold Fund that they have is one of the rare grants in Singapore that support projects for migrant workers and we are grateful to Martin, Charles and Darrell for their leadership and support over the years.



National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre

We are grateful to our friends at NVPC for sharing the research report produced from the Migrant Workers CoLabs that ran from August 2020 - March 2021. The insights in the report were instrumental in helping us to get a broad overview and in-depth understanding of the myriad of issues faced by migrant workers. We are also grateful to Gloria, Soek Mun, Lenard, Melissa and Michele for their friendship over the years and connecting us to other stakeholders.



Breaking New Ground

Jurong Town Corporation

We are grateful to Nicholas, Weng Chau and Yi Ling for providing venue sponsorship for Workshops 1 - 3 in Phase 2 at the various migrant worker Recreation Centres under JTC's care back then. Being able to conduct the workshops in places frequented by migrant workers was really precious and the open environment helped to facilitate the generation of creative ideas and formation of work-groups.



Tzu Chi Humanistic Youth Centre

We cherish our partnership with the Tzu Chi Humanistic Youth Centre, one that began in 2020 when we were incorporated as a co-operative. Over the years, their support has enabled us to have a beautiful office space and the venues to do the impact work we do. We are deeply grateful for the logistical and emotional support that Choon Choon, Che Wei, Jie Ming, Ethel and Jacker have provided over the years, for they are a big reason of why we can do the work we do.

People

Leaders Roundtable

Anthea Ong • Michael Cheah • Charles Tan • Bhing Navato • Charanjeet Singh • Zakir Hossain • Tony Bin • Dinesh Dhillon • K Jayaprema

Initial Advisory Committee

Anthea Ong • Michael Cheah • Kelvin Low • Jared Ng • Zakir Hossain • Ripon Chowdhury • Walter Theseira • Charan S Bal • Ethan Guo • Sim Gim Guan • Mark Ng • Brian Lim

Staff Team & Interns

Vincent Ng • Vandhana Jeyaram • Sarah Tan • Sin Melia • Amanda Tay • Nurulhuda Hassan • Melodie Yip • Vaishnavi Kannan • Adriale Pang • Ervin Ong

Work-Groups

Team History Buffs • Bhing Navato • Kimberly Pah • Jaya Anil Kumar • Sam Syahrul • Sonia Serrenade • **Team Good Company** • Tan Yan Hao • Raja • Thye Yoke Pean • **Team Cool Pot** • Ashokan Ramakrishnan • Chua Ningpei • Gokul Jeyaram • Junid Kasslin • Ayden Ramakrishnan • Chin Meng Leng • Nuraini Isa



Foreword by Vincent Ng

What is our duty as citizens / residents of Singapore?

Since our founding day in 2017, we at A Good Space have always believed that our duty is to be active citizens - to go beyond voting once every five years to starting projects that care for vulnerable communities - and Singapore can become an even more resilient society when we harness the ideas and energy of ordinary citizen changemakers.

Over the years, we tried several ways to encourage active citizenry: curating a physical space for 90+ changemakers to host film screenings, theater workshops and intimate discussions around social issues, organising A Good Pitch to create a nurturing environment for 77 citizens to turn their ideas into projects and eventually incorporating Singapore's first co-operative to mobilise diverse changemakers to work together on specific projects for greater impact than they can do alone.

During the pandemic, two of our changemaker members Anthea and Abhishek formed an emergency response collective with other NGOs and the Migrant Workers' Centre to deliver masks, food and other essentials to workers stuck in dormitories across Singapore.

In doing so, we learnt about the complexity of issues that affect a worker's well-being in Singapore, which cannot be solved by a single organisation / changemaker.

But organising diverse stakeholders to come together for collective action is extremely difficult - requiring a mix of influence, networks, luck and expertise in process facilitation to identify the right people to invite, articulate the issues well, manage power dynamics, align interests for action, etc... sustained over a period of time.

We were blessed to learn about the Collective Impact Process from NCSS and Tamarack Institute, which gave us some tools to form two multi-sector collectives - one for migrant workers and the other to improve digital inclusion for low-income families.

We have written this guide to share detailed tools and our own reflections from organising the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs, in hopes that it can be a reference for any changemaker (ground-up or working within an organisation), looking to organise multi-sector stakeholders to contribute to a complex social issue.

Citizens are our greatest untapped assets and they don't have to come forward only when they are angry. Complex challenges lie ahead for Singapore and as the 4G Leadership embarks on the Forward Singapore movement, we hope this guide can open up new possibilities for harnessing the potential of our citizens to meet these challenges, towards a more participative democracy.

Vincent Ng

General Manager & Founding Member
A Good Space Co-operative Limited



Foreword by Anthea Ong

Imagine a Singapore where everyone is a changemaker who cares about the kind of society we live in, one where we come together to be part of the solution for the problems we face in this place we call home?

'We have to create this future that we want to be a part of' was my own unfettered dream for A Good Space (AGS) when we kicked off this bold experiment in June 2017. We have most definitely fumbled and faced never-ending challenges along the way, in resources and in figuring out what our identity.

Yet five (long) years later, as I am writing this foreword for Singapore's first Community Action Guide for Migrant Workers on the completion of the first run of Listening Living Labs for Migrant Workers, I have never been clearer and more proud of who and what AGS is.

The Listening Living Labs underscores the vision of AGS by bringing together ordinary citizens and multi-sector stakeholders to create innovative solutions for complex issues, instead of relying solely on the government and institutions. We are very intentional in including persons with lived experiences (e.g. migrant workers or persons from low-income families) as participants and team leaders to lead change. Because everyone is a changemaker.

Two Listening Living Labs have been initiated - one that gathered 90 citizens and residents to look at making Singapore a more welcoming place for migrant workers to work and live in and the other that gathered 97 citizens and residents to look at improving digital inclusion for the 51,100 families living in public rental flats. Public agencies and other key institutional stakeholders were invited to participate but as equal partners in this truly ground-up undertaking.

It is important to note that both Labs have had almost zero institutional support in their first run because most funders do not yet associate such ecosystem-wide change making efforts being led by non-state players, in this case a strange co-operative of changemakers ('how come not a charity?').

But what we have is the dogged determination and diligence of Vincent Ng, General Manager of AGS and his small and mighty team of interns in moving us along, even when it sometimes seems like we may have taken on the load of a horse as a mule!

I sincerely hope that the completion of the first runs of both Labs will encourage more funders to challenge their existing funding models to bravely invest in the future runs of the Labs and/or other similarly independent non state-directed initiatives.

We must give the work back to the people to own the problem and solutions, to invest in their strengths and the assets of their communities. Diversity drives innovation - when we limit who can contribute, we are in fact limiting what problems we can solve.

I am immensely proud of Bhang Navato, the leader for work-group Team History Buffs and a domestic worker in Singapore for 28 years, for giving us and the Ministry of Manpower a new idea of facilitating better matching by sharing the employers' hiring history with employment agents and domestic workers.

This first Community Action Guide for Migrant Workers aims to codify the Listening Living Labs - a uniquely Singaporean process that has adapted from proven models such as IDEO's Design Thinking, David Cooperrider and Suresh Srivastva's Appreciative Inquiry and the more widely known, Collective Impact Process. It aims to capture the learnings of organising such citizen changemaking initiatives, for future generations of changemakers and community organisers.

It is also our way of honouring the 90 citizens and residents, including the volunteers on our Leaders Roundtable and especially the final three work-groups, who bravely came forward to join us in this incredible journey of active citizenship, for and with our migrant workers.

What you can't see, unfortunately, in this Guide are the human stories of connections that will outlast the work-groups, Listening Living Labs and maybe even A Good Space. It heartens me to see the deep friendships made between people of varying backgrounds because they share the same passion and determination in making Singapore a more welcoming place for our migrant workers to live and work in. Because we believe they are part of us, not apart from us.

I want to thank my Co-Chair and former HealthServe Executive Director, Michael Cheah, for his invaluable insights as an 'elder' of the migrant community and his business experience in change and transformation. Mostly, it's been such a pleasure and privilege to serve with such a good human as a co-leader on this journey. I am also grateful to the US Embassy of Singapore for awarding a small grant to me under their Alumni Community Project Fund which enabled us to continue on Phase 3 of this Migrant Workers' Listening Living Labs.

Last but not least, I can't be prouder of Vincent and all the interns who have been involved in the Listening Living Labs for the past 3 years. I hope this Guide always reminds you of the important seeds you have planted for Singapore to be a kinder better place. Thank you all for making me so hopeful for where we are going as a people.

What we do makes a difference, and as Jane Goodall urged, we have to decide what kind of difference we want to make.

May you always choose to act on your hopes for Singapore, and our people.

Anthea Ong

Founding Chairperson, A Good Space
Co-Chair, Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs



Foreword by Michael Cheah

Within these pages, we celebrate the remarkable achievements of the Migrant Workers Listening Living Lab's work-groups: Team Good Company, Team Cool Pot, and Team History Buffs. Over the past six months, these passionate teams fearlessly embraced innovation, prototyping ideas to create lasting impact for migrant workers.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to Ms Anthea Ong, A Good Space's Founding Chairperson, for the opportunity to co-chair this endeavour. Her visionary leadership and belief in collective action have shaped the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs into today's transformative force.

Team Good Company piloted a CV writing workshop to empower workers whose companies had gone bust and urgently need to find a job.

Team Cool Pot fostered social inclusion by engaging schools and youths to produce digital stories to challenge negative stereotypes and created connections between migrant workers and the community.

Team History Buffs worked on a recommendation to the Ministry of Manpower to enable foreign domestic workers to view the hiring history of their potential employers, to facilitate better matching that would benefit employers, domestic workers and employment agencies.

These work-groups exemplify the power of collaboration, innovation, and empathy. Engaging with migrant workers and stakeholders, they created initiatives grounded in lived experiences.

I sincerely appreciate the dedication and resilience of each work-group member. Gratitude also goes to migrant workers, partners, sponsors, and supporters for their invaluable contributions.

As you explore the stories and prototypes herein, join us in celebrating these achievements. May they inspire collaboration and innovation and amplify migrant workers' voices on their path to empowerment.

Michael Cheah

Former Executive Director, HealthServe
Co-Chair, Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs



Social Impact Created

90

People who participated in the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs journey, whether as a workshop participant, Leaders' Roundtable member, etc

909

Estimated volunteer hours contributed through participating in workshops, serving on the Initial Advisory Committee, Leaders Roundtable, etc

3

Number of work-groups that formed out of the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs

\$28,724

Estimated monetary value of volunteer hours contributed, assuming media hourly wage of \$31.60, estimated from median monthly salary from full-time work in Singapore in 2023



"You get to learn about different things that contribute to their distress. Now I'll understand a bit better when they come and see me as patients. I know they have this problem of high recruitment debt, bad living conditions... but now hearing it from so many different points of view, it adds another dimension to my understanding of the problem."

Dr Jared Ng

Senior Consultant

Institute of Mental Health



"Slowly, I'm having hope on changing the situation of domestic workers or migrant workers here. I've been working in Singapore for 27 years and with this group and what AGS is doing, I'm able to see hope in the future and I hope it will really come true."

Bhing Navato

Domestic Worker & Volunteer at HOME

Member of Leaders' Roundtable and

Member of Work-Group: History Buffs



The Listening Living Labs helped open doors for me to enter dormitories and recreation centres to speak to migrant workers to understand if CVs were helpful for them. It also connected me with employers and case workers in the Migrant Workers Centre (MWC), who helped me identify a gap where my prototype could be useful - writing CVs for workers whose companies have gone bust and urgently need to find a job and passing it to their employment agents.

Tan Yan Hao

Member of Work-Group: Good Company



Participating in the Listening Living Labs (L3) gave me direct access to multi-sector stakeholders and their resources and insights which I would not have otherwise received. Hearing from secondary school teachers, educators, other changemakers and migrant workers themselves helped me to refine my idea into a national competition for digital stories. The brand of the L3 also gave me credibility which helped me to reach out to government agencies to support my project.

Chua Ningpei

Member of Work-Group: Cool Pot



Through this process, I got to work with other like minded citizens who shared a common desire to understand the issue and to move the cause forward. This was precious as I got to be part of a process of co-creating a novel and impactful solution that fights apathy and promotes connection. I loved that the solution was refined through many rounds of iteration and each time we learned and improved the program

Ashokan Ramakrishnan

Member of Work-Group: Cool Pot



There's not an easy answer in that everyone has a story. The migrant workers have a story but it's not that everyone else is bad. Everyone has financial and emotional needs to consider. So it's a very complex issue and there's no quick fix. We need to deliver care and make sure businesses can thrive. I appreciate the careful walk through of these issues so we can say: what is the next best step?

Jonathan Farmer

Participant

Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs

Note to Reader

We have written this document in the style of a 'how-to' guide because we didn't have something like this in the local context when we were starting out. While we have presented our thoughts, tools and frameworks, we encourage you to use them as a reference to help inform your 'own way', because the communities you care about and the issues they face can be unique.

As you read this guide and try out things in your own communities, several questions might arise and if you ever feel interested to share, we'd love to hear and discuss them with you. Please feel free to reach out to us at: admin@agoodspace.org and let's learn together!

May you enjoy reading this guide and may it bring forth new possibilities for the communities you care about.

A Good Space Co-operative Limited

www.agoodspace.org

admin@agoodspace.org

Vincent Ng

General Manager, A Good Space Co-operative Limited

vincentng@agoodspace.org

vincentngcb@gmail.com

(65) 9829 5138

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We must regard social issues not simply as problems to be fixed, but also opportunities to rally society towards a common good.

Gerard Ee
Executive Director
Beyond Social Services

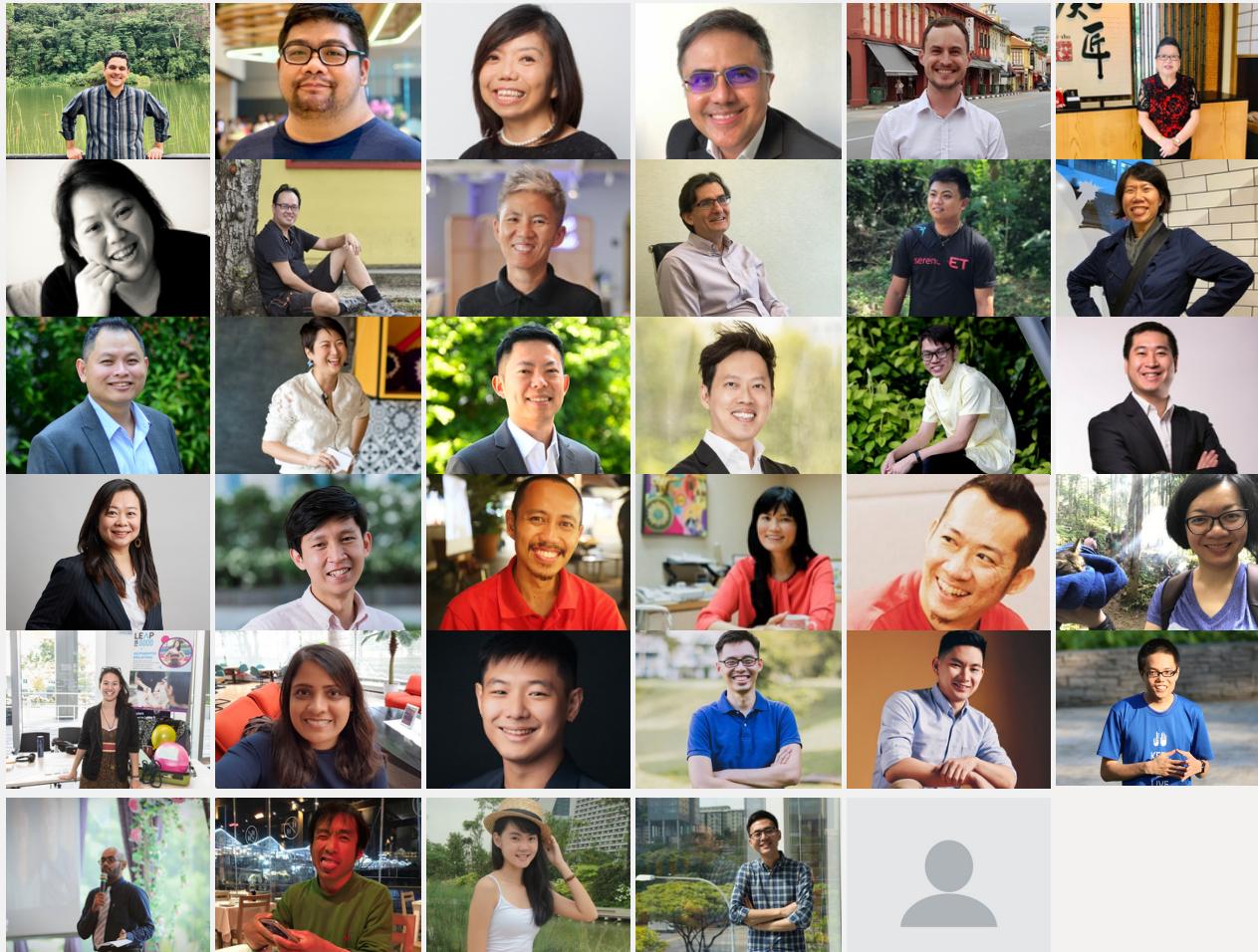




INTRODUCTION

- About A Good Space Co-operative
- Background
- What is a Complex Issue?
- Past Efforts in the Migrant Worker Space
- What is the Listening Living Labs?
- Overview of Listening Living Labs Process

About A Good Space Co-operative



A Good Space is Singapore's first co-operative to unite concerned citizens as a collective changemaking force to design meaningful solutions for good. As of January 2023, we have 34 members representing 11 different social issues and communities who collectively share resources, ideas, and collaborate on projects.

From jointly raising \$1.12 million to provide short-term financial assistance for vulnerable families during the pandemic to organising conferences for educators to explore fresh ways to engage students in social issues, AGS' members believe in working together for greater impact than they can do alone.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has"

Margaret Mead, cultural anthropologist

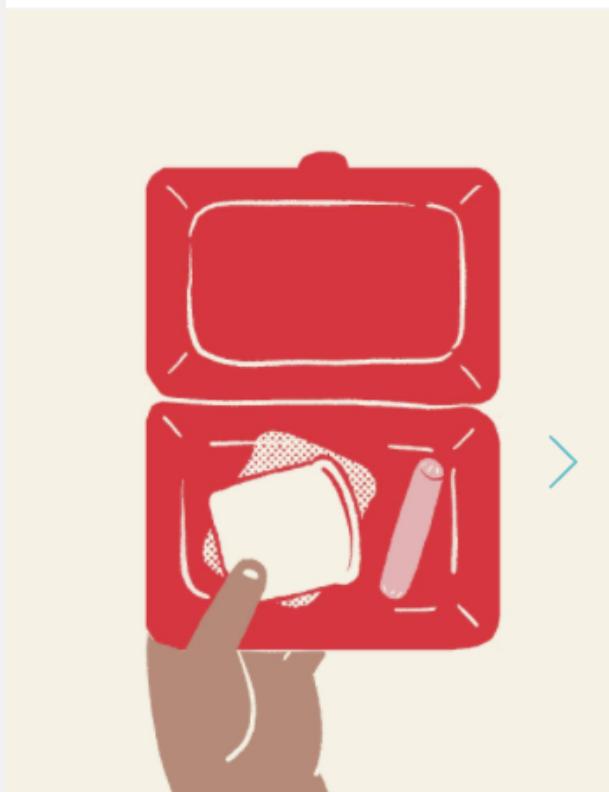
Background



A screenshot of a graphic from the S.H.A.R.E campaign

In February 2020, our founding Chairperson Anthea Ong and changemaker member Abhishek Bajaj gathered several changemakers in the migrant worker space to produce a set of graphics through the S.H.A.R.E campaign, encouraging employers to take proactive steps to support their domestic workers during the pandemic.

When infection clusters spread in migrant worker dormitories in April 2020, Anthea and Abhishek convened several NGOs, government agencies and ground-up groups in a multi-sector emergency response collective called the Collective of Migrant Efforts (COME).



#HOMEFORALL Migrants



by **Collective of Migrant Efforts for Hope Initiative Alliance**



\$941,678

raised from 8311 donors

100% of \$800,000

Expired

Donate Today

 **DONATE TODAY**

COME started an initiative called #HOMEFORALL migrants to raise \$800,000 to provide 20,000 migrant workers with aid such as food and healthcare packs. The group eventually raised \$2.1 million and distributed care meals and other essentials to workers stuck in hundreds of dormitories across Singapore, with the help of the Alliance of Guest Workers (AGWO) and the Migrant Workers' Centre (MWC).

In doing so, we gained a deeper appreciation for the complex issues faced by migrant workers (and later, domestic workers), the unsung heroes who have built our homes, paved our roads and cared for our elderly / children. We also experienced the impact a collective can create.

While masks and food were helpful in providing immediate relief, they seemed like short-term fixes for the longer term issues that affect a worker's well-being in Singapore.

These issues are complex because:

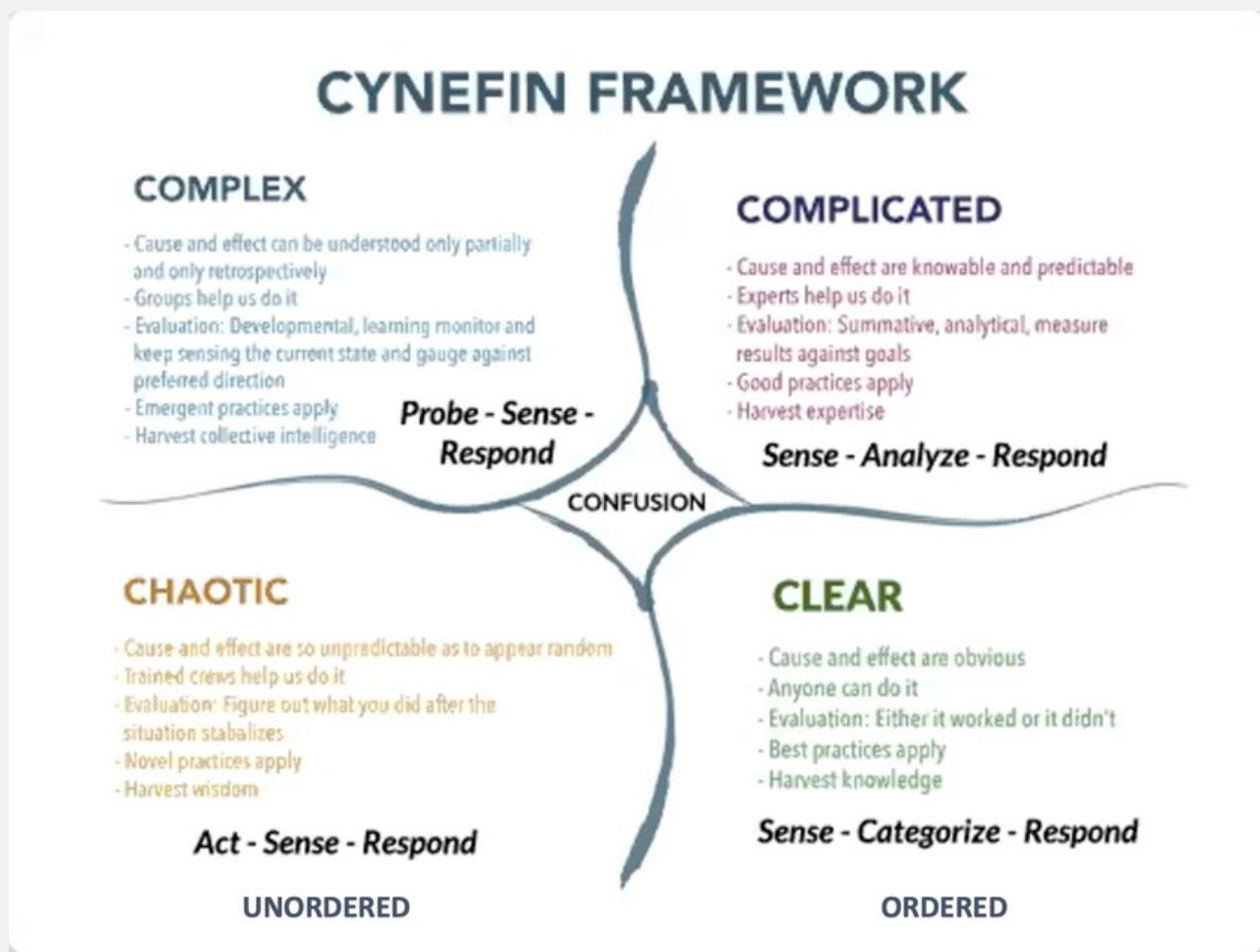
- Different people have different views on what the 'real issue' is and how to solve them;
- The issues may be inter-connected, with one issue leading to another; and
- No single organisation can solve them alone, there needs to be a multi-sector solution

We wondered: what more could we do to create longer term change for issues faced by our migrant workers, that we cannot do alone?

What is a Complex Issue?

How we go about addressing a problem depends on what type of problem it is. The [Cynefin framework](#) developed by management consultant David Snowden identifies four types of problems: (i) Obvious or simple problems, (ii) Complicated or technical problems, (iii) Complex problems and (iv) Chaotic problems. Complex problems tend to:

- Involve multiple stakeholders who have diverse perspectives and interests – the problem may not have a single root cause and can be connected to other problems. People may have different perspectives on what the root problem is and everyone is right in some way. Therefore, there is no one 'correct' definition of the problem (or solution).
- Constantly evolving with no fixed solutions – causing people in the space to have to adapt and grapple with uncertainty
- Cannot be solved by a single organisation – a good solution requires the support of stakeholders from different sectors e.g. government, corporates, non-profits, academics, etc.



An image describing the Cynefin framework. Source: [SFiO](#)

For example, the challenges that migrant workers face are complex because of the different perspectives and interests of different stakeholders - how does one even begin to generate ideas for a solution?



* Names are anonymized for privacy reasons

Past Efforts in the Migrant Worker Space

Between the two years of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021, there were several significant efforts to engage multi-sector stakeholders to understand challenges faced by our migrant workers, most notably:



NVPC's Migrant Worker CoLabs

They brought together stakeholders from the public, private and people sector to come together for conversations to identify key issues and five opportunity areas to improve the quality of life of migrant workers. This was produced into [a report](#), which summarised the issues, opportunity areas and system maps that were created.

The Majority Trust's Building Bridges Report

They produced a report that highlighted Singaporeans' attitudes towards migrant workers and the views of different stakeholders on social integration.

Asia Philanthropy Circle's Employer Certification Scheme Study

They consulted stakeholders from the public, private and people sectors to gather feedback on the feasibility for an Employer Certification Scheme to promote and recognise ethical recruitment of migrant workers.

Therefore, we wanted to build on the research done to convene a multi-sector collective to act on the insights and opportunity areas that were surfaced.

What is the Listening Living Labs?

To approach complex issues, we believe in the need to organise multi-sector stakeholders in a productive way that leads to action and impact. After all, each stakeholder has different interests and we have all been part of similar gatherings where there are insightful discussions that may not have led to action.

Being new to this, we had a serendipitous opportunity when the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) organised a [**Collective Impact Masterclass Series**](#) with the Tamarack Institute from Canada to help charities and social impact organisations in Singapore learn about the Collective Impact Process and potentially apply it.

First described by John Kania and Mark Kramer in the Stanford Social Innovation Review in 2011, the Collective Impact Process is a disciplined form of multi-sector collaboration that has proven to be an effective framework for high-impact change to address complex issues such as poverty in North America and Canada.

Learning from Tamarack Institute's tools and experience, and infusing elements from other methodologies such as Design Thinking and Appreciative Inquiry, we created the Listening Living Labs (L3), a process to gather diverse participants from different stakeholder groups to listen, stretch, and act collectively on ideas to address issues that cannot be solved by one particular group or organisation. This process is pioneered by [**A Good Space Co-operative**](#).



When should a collective approach to addressing issues be considered?

We think a collective approach to addressing issues can be considered if you answer 'yes' to at least 3 of the questions below: (adapted from Tamarack Institute's [Collective Impact Framing Questions Worksheet](#) to assess readiness to be part of a Collective Impact initiative.)

No.	Theme	Yes	No
1	Is the issue a complex issue that cannot be solved by a single organisation alone? (see above for how 'complex' is defined)		
2	Do we believe working with multi-sector stakeholders is essential to create the change we wish to see?		
3	Do we believe long-term (3 to 5+ years) investment is needed to achieve success?		
4	Do we aim to effect a change of 10% or more on a metric for the identified issue?		
5	Are we committed to measuring and using measurable data to improve the solutions put forth by the collective over time?		

In addition to this, there are several conditions to consider when selecting a specific issue to apply a collective approach or a Listening Living Labs process to. This is covered in greater detail in the section Choosing a Theme and a Chairperson in Phase 0 below.

Overview of Listening Living Labs Process

Phases	Key Stages	Period	Key Deliverables
Phase 0: Pre-Scope	Literature Review	Jun - Jul 2021	Complete literature review and identify key themes and potential challenge statements
	Recruit Initial Advisory Committee (IAC)	Jun - Aug 2021	Form IAC with 6 - 10 members
	IAC Meetings	Aug - Oct 2021	Gain clarity from IAC members on (i) what is the effectiveness of existing solutions for these issues, (ii) what are gaps in these solutions and (iii) do they see any 'white spaces' for citizen action?
	Decide on Theme(s) and Find a Chairperson	Nov 2021 - Jan 2022	Select theme(s) to focus the Listening Living Labs process on and select a Chairperson for the Leaders' Roundtable.
Phase 1: Scope	Form a Secretariat Team	Nov - Jan 2022	Build a team that can play these 3 main roles: (i) Secretariat Lead, (ii) Secretariat Researcher and (iii) Secretariat Administrator
	Assemble a Leaders' Roundtable	Jan - Mar 2022	Form an LRT with 6 - 10 members who are influential in the selected theme
	LRT Meeting #1	Apr 2022	Scope the main challenge statement and identify key stakeholders to engage for Workshop 1

Phase 2: Listen & Ideate	Workshop 1	Apr 2022	Gather representatives of multi-sector stakeholders to discuss insights on the selected theme(s) and brainstorm initial ideas in response to the challenge statements.
	LRT Meeting #2	May 2022	Prioritise ideas that were generated in Workshop 1 for the collective to develop further in future workshops.
	Workshop 2	May 2022	Form work-groups to refine ideas generated in Workshop 1 that were prioritised by the LRT.
	LRT Meeting #3	Jun 2022	LRT members to give feedback on work-group ideas; share resources and networks they can connect the team members to.
	Workshop 3	Jul 2022	Work-groups give a status update on their progress since Workshop 2, articulate the prototype they want to build and receive feedback from each other.
	Workshop 4	Oct 2022	Work-groups pitch their ideas and receive feedback, resources and networks from audience members.
Phase 3: Prototype	Mid-Point Check-In	Feb 2023	Work-groups have started implementing their prototypes. Invite stakeholders to comment on the work-groups' progress to help them refine their prototypes if necessary.
	Finale	Jun 2023	Secretariat Team will document and publish lessons learnt from the prototypes and if the prototype is successful, produce a concept note and organise an event to gather potential implementation partners to proliferate the prototype to reach a wider audience.



Is this a problem we can solve or is it an ongoing polarity, paradox or dilemma that we must manage well?

Barry Johnson
Founder
Polarity Partnerships





PHASE 0: PRE-SCOPE

- Part 1: Literature Review to Craft a Challenge Statement
- Part 2: Recruit an Initial Advisory Committee (IAC)
- Part 3: IAC Meetings
- Part 4: Choose a Theme and Chairperson
- Reflections on the IAC

Part 1: Literature Review to Craft a Challenge Statement

We started by reading through various research reports about migrant workers to identify the broad themes of issues they might face. The list of reports we read can be found in the Appendix. From reading these reports, we produced a [slide deck](#) that identified four key themes of issues and for each theme, we formulated some initial challenge statements:

No.	Theme	Challenge Statements
1	Lack of a dignified life through struggles with living conditions and mental wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How might we keep workers fit and healthy through improved work and living environments?• How might we increase access to mental health services amongst migrant workers and reduce the stigma associated with seeking help?
2	Barriers with access to healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How might we incorporate migrant health into the core curriculum of all students of the health sciences locally?• How might we improve migrant workers' understanding of healthcare provisions mandated by law?
3	Prejudice arising from lack of social integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How might we increase social connection between migrant workers and Singaporean locals so as to shift perceptions and acceptance of migrant workers in Singaporean society?• How might we foster recognition and respect for migrant worker contributions?• How might we create a new social compact that Singaporean residents, including the government, business, society and migrant workers are all comfortable with?

4	<p>Complexities in the labour supply system: wage theft, high agent fees and restrictions on changing jobs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How might we leverage technology to positively 'disrupt' the recruitment / middleman industry, empowering all players with transparent data? How might we build on existing efforts to further ensure the protection of workers who may face wage, benefits and rights exploitation?
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This document is a continuous work-in-progress

As we learned more about the issues surrounding migrant worker communities, we realized it was a truly complex issue, since it:

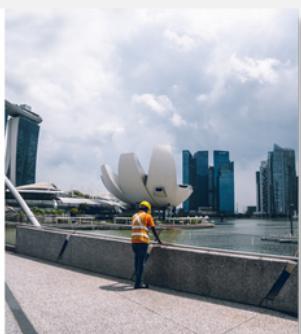
- Is emergent and changing
- Different stakeholders have different views
- Many inter-connections between various sub-issues

This document is a compilation of research and opinions from various sources and may have its own insights, biases and limitations.

Therefore, we acknowledge that the issues presented here may not comprehensively represent the breadth and depth of issues faced by migrant worker communities.

Nonetheless, we hope this is a starting point to spark conversations amongst leaders in the Leaders' Workgroup and seek your contribution in sharing your experiences and the issues that you see.

Image Source: Shown Ang on Unsplash



Issue 1

Lock of a dignified life through struggles with living conditions and mental wellness

“

“There are many cockroaches in the kitchen and also in our rooms. The urinals in the toilets are overflowing with urine and the workers step on the urine and then walk to their rooms... Today, one cleaner went to the toilet and just sprayed water and left.

He didn't use any toilet and also did not dispose of the trash, which has been around for two days. Empty food boxes are piled up on the rubbish bins and these bins are very near our rooms...”

Source: Coronavirus: Workers describe crowded, cramped living conditions at dormitory gazetted as isolation area by Straits Times (Apr 6, 2020)

Living conditions: unpacking the issue further

Improved living standards were announced in June 2020, with the following specifications:

- Living space per resident of ≥ 6sqm (excluding shared facilities) up from the previous ≥ 4sqm (including shared facilities)
- Up to 10 beds per room, previously typically 12 - 16 beds
- ≥ 1 set of toilet, bathroom, sink & urinal per 5 beds; previously per 15 beds

Some employers reported renting condominiums for their migrant worker supervisors. Many employers also recognise that newer Purpose-Built dorms have high standard gyms and multiple recreational facilities which go beyond regulation stipulations.

However, there are pre-existing discrepancies between the conditions in such residences and other kinds of accommodation like factory-converted dormitories.

Source: Migrant Workers Crisis by MPC
Image Source: TODAY Online



Mental wellness: unpacking the issue further

Besides the prolonged confinement due to tight movement restrictions from the pandemic, other long-standing issues that could affect the mental wellness of migrant workers include:

- Ability to receive salaries
- Housing (for injury or salary claim workers)
- Threat of repatriation from employers
- Debt from agent fees
- Issues back home with their families

Migrant workers may choose not to seek help due to the fear of their employers finding out. They often have to shoulder the burden of proving their grievances to the authorities and language barriers do not help.

At the same time, they also have to continue to live under the management of their employers. While some are perhaps more sympathetic, the lack of dignified living conditions can affect how migrant workers carry out their everyday lives and their work.

Image Source: The Straits Times



Several initiatives are seeking to address this issue

1. Project Dawn

A task force to boost mental health care and support for migrant workers in Singapore, comprising representatives from MOM, IMH, MPC, HDB, and various government agencies. The task force is to focus on several areas, including screening migrant workers who may have mental health problems and equipping front-line officers with skills to identify at-risk workers and channel them towards getting the right care.

2. Various efforts by NGOs and Community Groups

Groups like CMSC have organised various programs and online engagement sessions like WePals, where Singaporeans can connect with migrant workers and form friendships. Others like 24Asia have held virtual concerts and free computer lessons for migrant workers.

3. Counselling hotlines

Healthserve partnered with Samaritans of Singapore to launch a new crisis hotline to provide round-the-clock emotional support for migrant workers, manned by its staff and volunteers, available in English, Tamil and even Bengali. Other helplines include the Here With You Helpline.

New task force to tackle mental health issues among migrant workers



24Asia - Free Computer Class



What are possible opportunity areas?

- How might we keep workers fit and healthy through improved work and living environments?
- How might we increase access to mental health services amongst migrant workers and reduce the stigma associated with seeking help?

Image Source: ixf on Unsplash



Screenshots from our slide deck summarising key insights and challenge statements consolidated from our research



What is a challenge statement?

A challenge statement is a concise statement that describes a specific problem or opportunity that needs to be addressed. It is a tool to focus efforts and resources on solving a particular issue.

Challenge statements help to define the scope of a project and guide the development of solutions. They are often used to inspire teams to come up with creative and effective solutions to the challenges they face.

Challenge statements typically begin with, "How might we...?"

To ensure that they are effective in guiding efforts towards a desired outcome, challenge statements should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART).

This desktop research gave us an appreciation of the wide spectrum of issues faced by migrant workers. To determine the most appropriate issue(s) we could intervene on, we needed to speak to people with experience working in the migrant worker space. Therefore, we formed an Initial Advisory Committee (IAC).

Part 2: Recruit an Initial Advisory Committee

We identified a list of people who could advise us on the above issues and invited them to be on an Initial Advisory Committee (IAC). We looked for people who:

- Have lived experience of either of the above issues
- Can represent the various touch points that a migrant worker may interact with, such as employers, dormitory operators, non-profit organisations, etc
- Has done or has access to research papers on either of the above issues

We sent the slide deck we had created and invested time talking with each person to explain our objectives and had to accept rejection or unanswered emails. With persistence and consistent follow-ups, we are grateful that the people listed below accepted our invitation to join the IAC:

No.	Name	Designation
1	Ms Anthea Ong (Lead Facilitator)	Founding Chairperson, A Good Space
2	Mr Michael Cheah	Former Executive Director, Healthserve
3	Mr Kelvin Low	General Manager, Tee Up Dormitory
4	Dr Jared Ng	Consultant, Emergency and Crisis Services, Institute of Mental Health and Member of Project Dawn Taskforce
5	Mr Zakir Hossain Khokan	Migrant Worker in Singapore for more than 18 years and founder of the One Bag, One Book project.
6	Mr Ripon Chowdhury	Migrant Worker in Singapore for more than 10 years and founder of Migrant Writers Singapore
7	Associate Professor Walter Theseira	Associate Professor, Economics & Head, Master of Management (Urban Transportation) Programme

No.	Name	Designation
8	Dr Charan S Bal	Lecturer in Development Studies, Fakultas Interdisiplin UKSW
9	Mr Ethan Guo	General Manager, TWC2
10	Mr Sim Gim Guan	Executive Director, Singapore National Employers Federation
11	Dr Mark Ng	Country Health Manager, Shell Health
12	Mr Brian Lim	Director, 8DGE Works

We had also reached out to officers from the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) to invite them to join the IAC but they preferred to give feedback from behind the scenes rather than participating in the IAC formally as a member. This was to avoid a situation where MOM is perceived to directly endorse any of the solutions created by the Listening Living Labs, which would require a more lengthy due diligence process on their end.



Screenshot from one of the IAC meetings

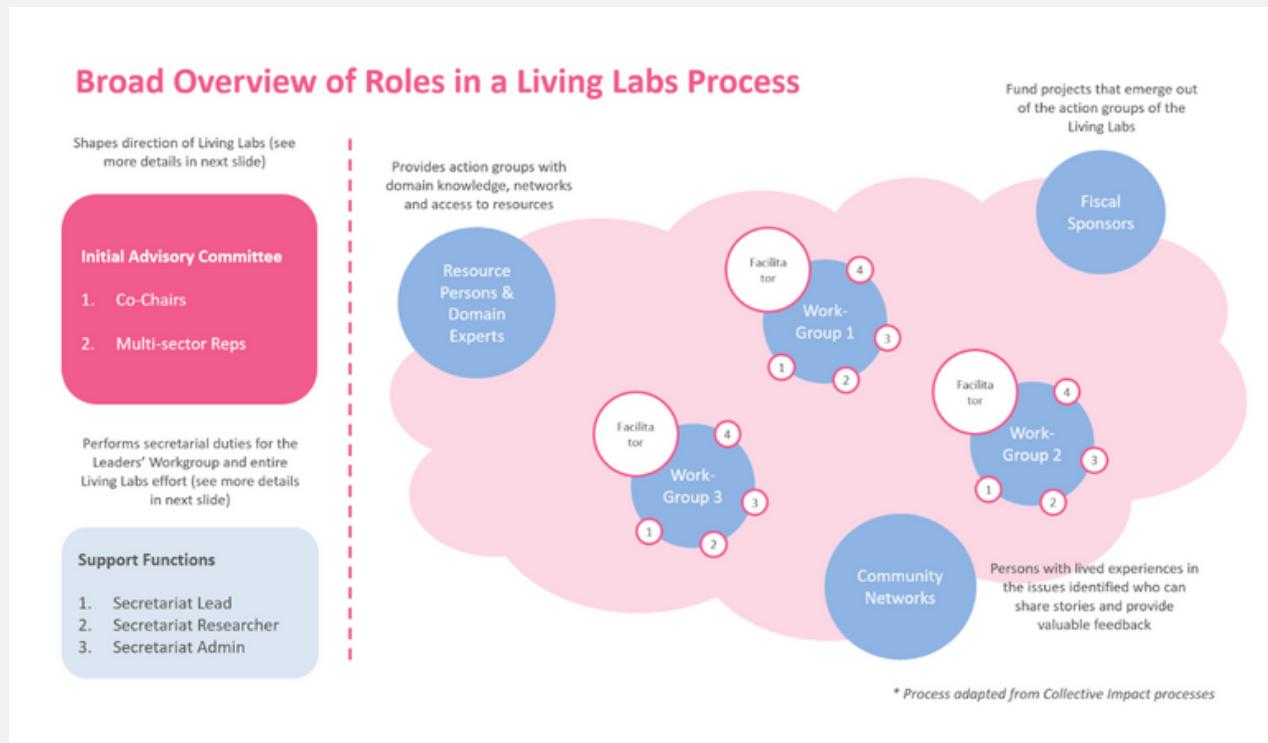
Part 3: IAC Meetings

IAC Meeting 1: Introductions and Context Setting

11 August 2021

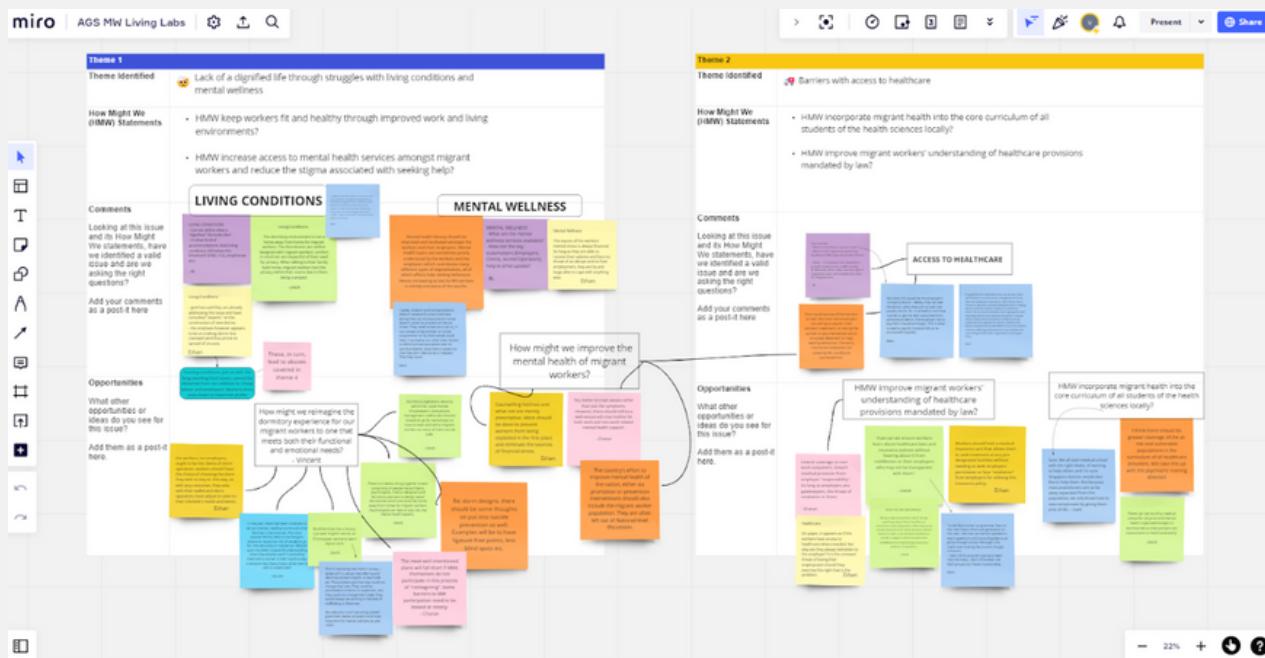
In this first meeting, we focused on covering the following key points:

- Build rapport between IAC members by asking them to share their first experience meeting with a migrant worker or if they were migrant workers, their first experience meeting a local. IAC members also shared why they accepted the invite to join the IAC.
- Introduce them to A Good Space as a community of changemakers committed to working together to create greater impact that we cannot do alone.
- Explain why now is a good time to convene for action in the migrant worker space because of good research done, the outpouring of ground-up initiatives and public attention to issues faced by migrant workers during the pandemic.
- Explain the Listening Living Labs process and possible outputs from this process.
- Explain their role as IAC members to share lived experiences and expertise to help us identify the key issues we can rally citizens and multi-sector stakeholders to solve.



Screenshot of a slide we showed describing roles in a Listening Living Labs Process

In between Meeting 1 and 2, we asked members to give their comments on the four themes and respective challenge statements we had identified in the slide deck we had sent to them earlier, using a virtual board hosted on Miro.



Screenshot of the Miro Board we used to ask members of the IAC to share their feedback

Specifically, we asked them to:

- Give comments: Looking at this theme and its challenge statements, have we identified valid issues and are we asking the right questions?
- Share other opportunities: What other challenges or ideas do you see for this theme that we may have missed?

IAC Meeting 2: Elaborating on Insights and Comments

8 September 2021

In between Meeting 1 and 2, we looked through the Miro board and clustered similar comments together. In the second meeting, we focused on the following points:

- Present a summary of insights and comments shared by IAC members on the Miro Board for each of the 4 themes identified
- Invite IAC members to elaborate on insights and comments they shared for each theme

The purpose of this meeting was to kickstart discussions that could eventually help us reach a consensus in Meeting 3 on the issues and challenge statements we can put out to gather citizens and changemakers to create solutions for.

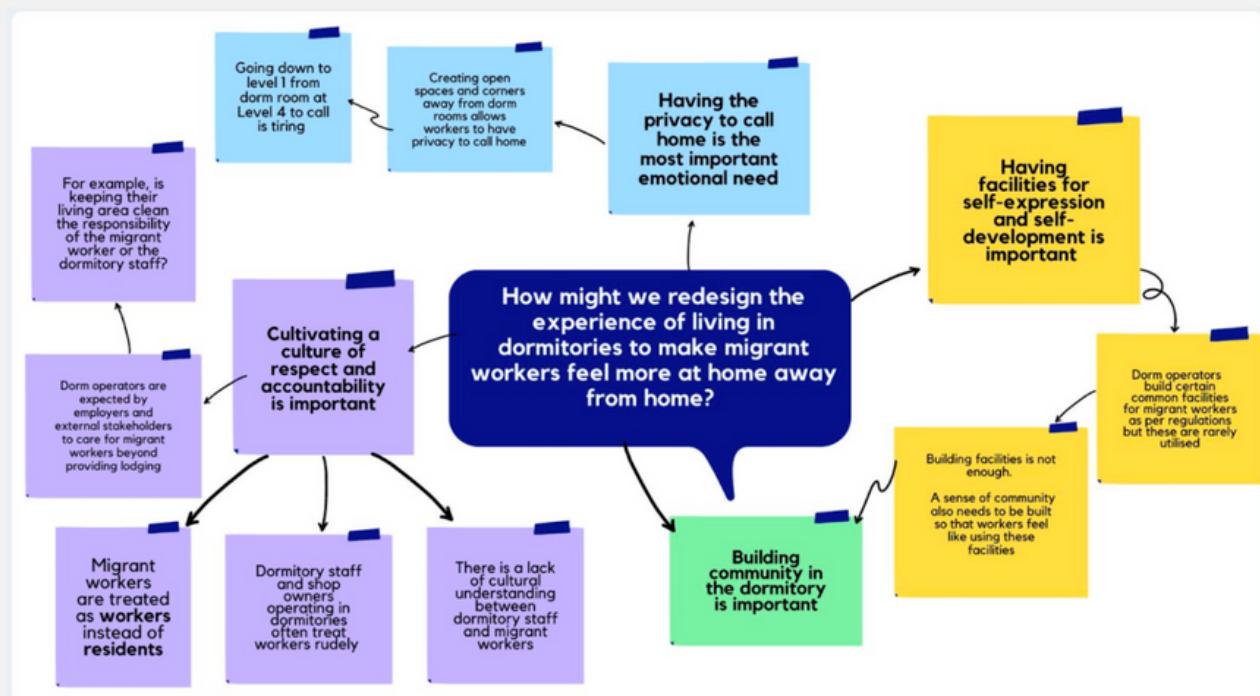
IAC Meeting 3: Decide on Final Challenge Statements

13 October 2021

In between Meeting 2 and 3, we consolidated and clustered similar comments and developed refined challenge statements, which we would present to the IAC in Meeting 3. In doing so, it became clear that there were different, sometimes competing perspectives in some of the themes. Therefore, we focused on the following points in the third meeting:

- Articulate competing perspectives which surfaced in some of the themes in a visual way and invite IAC members to find ways to integrate these perspectives when refining the challenge statements.
- Seek consensus from IAC members on the refined challenge statements to be put out to the public when convening the Listening Living Labs.

We started by presenting the perspectives for each theme (e.g. the 3 key emotional needs for migrant workers living in dormitories are: having the privacy to call home, having facilities for self-expression and self-development and cultivating a culture of respect and accountability).



Screenshot of Insights and Refined Challenge Statement for Theme 1: Lack of a Dignified Life through Struggles with Living Conditions and Mental Wellness

After hearing this, we invited IAC members to reflect on the question: "What is one perspective that is not mine that is new to me?" Next, we asked IAC members to select the theme that most resonated with them out of the four. They were divided into smaller groups where they examined the refined challenge statement and attempted to reach an agreement on the challenge statement(s) that would be used to invite the public and changemakers to form work-groups for action in the next phase of the Listening Living Labs.

From Meeting 3, a few insights became apparent, which were helpful in scoping the final challenge statements that were put out to the public through the Listening Living Labs process later on:



The issues that migrant workers face are deeply intertwined. For example, issues with mental well-being should not just be addressed symptomatically (e.g. when a migrant worker shows signs of distress and requires counseling services).

An interplay of various systemic issues like recruitment debt, wage stagnation, lack of medical insurance coverage, job security and poor living conditions worsens mental health issues. Therefore, we need to appreciate the root causes behind mental distress and look at solutions more holistically.



Opportunity areas for intervention in the dormitories lie in either redesigning the dormitory system through a multidisciplinary participatory approach and / or working with existing dormitory systems to make small changes; but this cannot be isolated from government's current design parameters and needs to be empathetic to different perspectives of key stakeholders

Part 4: Choose a Theme and Chairperson

Refined Challenge Statements after IAC Meetings

After the IAC meetings, the refined challenge statements were:

No.	Theme	Challenge Statements
1	Struggles with Dormitory Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How might we redesign the experience of living in dormitories to make workers feel more at home away from home?
2	Barriers with Access to Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How might we encourage migrant workers with non-injury related medical issues to feel comfortable seeking help?• How might we ensure continuity of care for migrant workers with chronic health conditions when they step out of the medical centre?
3	Social Exclusion of Migrant Voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How might we ensure that the voices of migrant workers are included as equal stakeholders in the various touch points they have with Singapore society?
4	High Recruitment Debt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How might we document the recruitment process for migrant workers so that we know where to intervene to reduce high recruitment debt?

We consolidated the insights and challenge statements refined from the IAC meetings into a document we titled the [**Listening Report**](#) and published it on our website:



THERE ARE SOME BARRIERS TO THE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF MIGRANT WORKERS IN SINGAPORE:

- 1** The perpetuation of negative stereotypes and misrepresentations of migrant workers in public discourse.
- 2** There is no common understanding amongst different stakeholders about what the level of social inclusion of migrant workers in Singapore should be.
- 3** The transient nature of low-wage migrant workers and their labour.
- 4** The distant housing locations of migrant workers away from residential estates and neighbourhoods.

Listening Living Labs with Migrant Worker Communities pg 52 of 63

THESE ARE SOME INITIATIVES BEING DONE FOR THE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF MIGRANT WORKERS:

Efforts to encourage bonding
These initiatives attempt to increase opportunities for migrant workers and the rest of Singapore society to interact with each other.

Some examples of current initiatives include COVID-19 Migrant Support Coalition (CMSC), Sama Sama, WIMBY and Migrant X Me.

Efforts to improve representation
These initiatives aim to showcase the talents, skills and unique lives of migrant workers.

Some examples of current initiatives include the various activities carried out by Migrant Writers of Singapore, Sama Sama and WIMBY.

Image Source: WIMBY

Listening Living Labs with Migrant Worker Communities pg 54 of 63

WE NEED TO ACCEPT MIGRANT WORKERS AT ALL TOUCH POINTS:

- 1** Migrant workers need to first be more accepted at all regular day-to-day touch points in the community.
- 2** There needs to be more efforts made to improve the representation of migrant workers in public discourse.
- 3** There needs to be more efforts made to bring migrant workers' physical presence into touch points within neighbourhoods.
- 4** There needs to be more institutionalised efforts to engage and interact with migrant workers in spaces such as schools.

Listening Living Labs with Migrant Worker Communities pg 60 of 63

Screenshots of our Listening Report

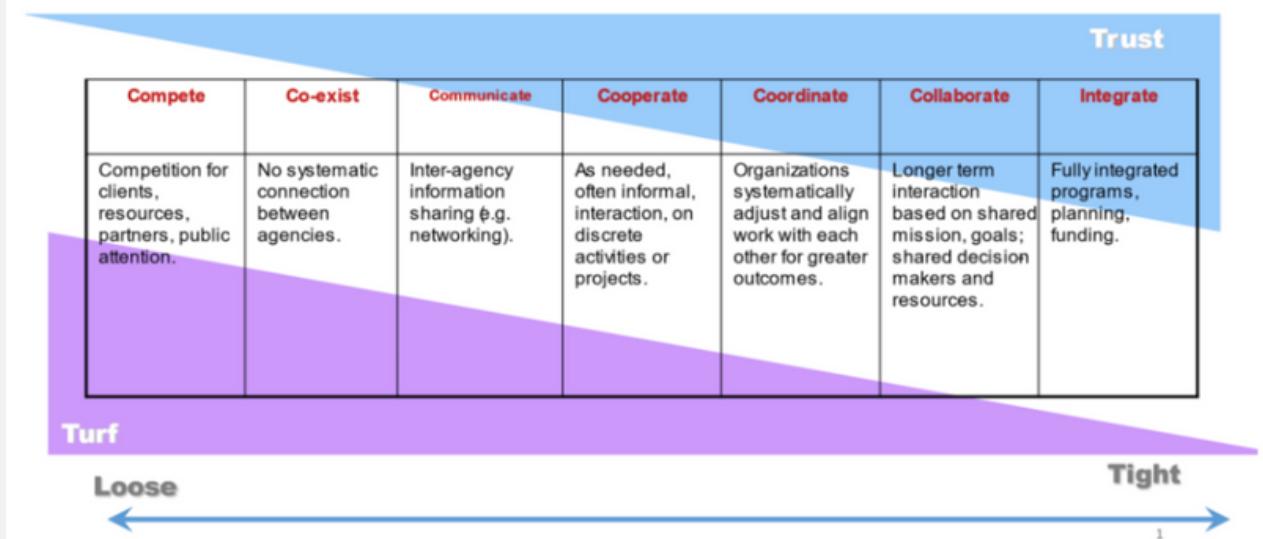
Decision Matrix to Choose a Theme

Before deciding whether to proceed with the above four themes for the Listening Living Labs, we considered the seven conditions outlined below, derived from our interpretation of the Collective Impact Process. Perhaps not every complex issue is best tackled by a citizen-led collective. We think that the more these conditions are met, the higher the chance of launching well:

No.	Condition	Elaboration
1	It does not duplicate the efforts of existing work-groups, Alliances for Action, Citizen's Panel, etc...	If there was another similar effort focused on action for migrant worker issues, then it might not be a good idea to start a different initiative, unless we are working on different issues that affect migrant workers.
2	The issue is important to your community and cannot be solved by a single organisation alone	The issue must have either urgency or high public interest. For example, there was significant media attention and public interest in migrant workers because of their circumstances during the pandemic.
3	You can get influential leadership to form a Leaders Roundtable	Especially an influential Chairperson who can rally different stakeholders to participate in the workshops. (See section below on Selecting a Good Chairperson)
4	Realistically, you can see gaps where community driven solutions can be created	<p>After conducting a landscape review of the issues and existing solutions, you should ideally be able to see gaps where you can envision solutions that can be driven by the People or Private sector. If you foresee only policy recommendations driven by the Public sector coming out of this, then it might be difficult for people to feel energized to continue being part of the collective.</p> <p>Being able to see possibilities to start small action projects is what keeps the momentum of the collective going. If it stays at talking for too long, people lose energy very quickly.</p>

5	There is a good potential of collaboration on this issue amongst different stakeholders	There must ideally at least be a history (or some prior attempts) of communication or cooperation among ground-ups, NGOs, government agencies, etc in the issue that you are trying to tackle; even better if there is a history of collaboration. (see below for The Collaboration Spectrum for a definition of these terms)
6	Funders care about what you are doing	Securing funders can be crucial to enticing people to come forward to form work-groups, knowing they have the resources to implement their ideas, although it is not a dealbreaker if you don't have them.
7	You have someone with process facilitation skills	This refers to expertise like knowing how to design a brainstorming session, managing different power dynamics in the room, how to help participants align diverse interests to identify areas for action, etc - which can come in handy when designing the workshops. Try to have at least one person in the core team or Leaders' Roundtable who has this expertise. Ideally, there should be three people who can bounce off ideas with each other to design the workshops in phase 2 together.

The Collaboration Spectrum



When we talk about collaboration, what do we really mean? From [The Collaboration Spectrum](#) by Tamarack Institute

Selecting 4 Themes as Our Area of Focus

With the IAC's contributions and our own reflections, we eventually landed on selecting all 4 themes as the focus areas for this Listening Living Labs because several factors in the decision matrix above were fulfilled. Our thought process is outlined below:

No.	Condition		Elaboration
1	It does not duplicate the efforts of existing work-groups, Alliances for Action, Citizen's Panel, etc...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There were already research efforts such as the NVPC's Migrant Worker CoLabs, The Majority Trust's Building Bridges Report and the Asia Philanthropy Circle's Employer Certification Scheme as mentioned above but not too many platforms to mobilise multi-sector stakeholders to translate the insights found into actionable projects.
2	The issue is important to your community and cannot be solved by a single organisation alone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There was significant media attention and public interest in migrant workers because of their circumstances during the pandemic. Many citizens stepped up to start several ground-up initiatives to support migrant workers. This gave us confidence that people will come when we organise public workshops in Phase 2.
3	You can get influential leadership to form a Leaders Roundtable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	We were grateful to be able to recruit two influential leaders (Anthea and Michael) to serve as Co-Chairs of the Leaders Roundtable. (see next chapter in Phase 1 below)
4	Realistically, you can see gaps where community driven solutions can be created	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The two issues that we thought deeper about were "Barriers to Access to Healthcare" and "High Recruitment Debt". (Continued on the next page)

Healthcare seemed like something that was best addressed with a policy intervention, such as [**MOM setting up regional medical centres**](#) to provide affordable care; or with a solution at scale driven by an institution, such as the [**Migrant Workers Centre partnering with Leap 201 Foundation to develop Care4MigrantWorkers**](#), the first low-cost group term life insurance designed to cover non-work related deaths, total and permanent disability or critical illnesses.

But we felt it was still worth exploring whether community driven solutions could form in the areas of encouraging workers to seek help for non-injury related medical issues (e.g. mobile dental clinics for dental ailments?) or ensuring continuity of care for migrant workers (e.g. sending nurses into dormitories?) Therefore, we decided to keep this issue.

We learnt that recruitment debt is an extremely complex issue that spans international boundaries and has existed for decades. Many solution attempts have been made over the years, such as creating tech platforms to connect workers with jobs directly or establishing recruitment centres in source countries like Bangladesh to eliminate the middlemen. However, these solutions have seen varying degrees of success. It could be possible that this issue is too large for community-driven solutions to emerge.

However, one opportunity we identified from our research and conversations with the IAC was that while community-driven solutions might not fully address the problem, perhaps citizens could help to map out the complex recruitment process and cash flows from agent to agent, which could eventually help with surfacing potential solutions that could be taken on by a migrant worker organisation.

5	There is a good potential of collaboration on this issue amongst different stakeholders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Because of the pandemic, there was a history of communication, cooperation and coordination between different stakeholders. For example, in the early days when infection clusters broke out in the dormitories, NGOs, government agencies, ground-up groups, dormitory operators and employers worked tirelessly together to deliver masks, food and essential supplies to workers.
6	Funders care about what you are doing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Although there weren't many local funders supporting migrant worker related projects, we are grateful that one of the rare few, Charles from The Majority Trust, decided to join the Leaders Roundtable. They had set up the Scaffold Fund to support projects that promote social integration of locals and migrant workers and we hoped some of these funds could be channeled to work-groups emerging from the Listening Living Labs.
7	You have someone with process facilitation skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Anthea and Michael (our Co-Chairs for the Leaders Roundtable), had experience with process facilitation skills and had either participated in or convened multi-sector collectives before. This gave us confidence that we could tap on their expertise to better design the workshops later in Phase 2.

Adding 2 Themes for Domestic Workers

Shortly after Anthea and Michael agreed to become the Co-Chairs of the Leaders Roundtable, Anthea raised the point that the 4 themes focused on migrant construction workers but not domestic workers. She felt this was a sizable group of migrant workers (almost 246,300 in December 2021 as per the Ministry of Manpower's foreign workforce numbers) that we should not leave out.

While issues faced by migrant construction workers were thrust into the spotlight during the pandemic, she was concerned that issues faced by domestic workers such as burnout and poor mental health were not discussed as much.

Therefore, we conducted further desktop research and spoke to several stakeholders in the domestic worker space. Eventually, this led us to make some refinements to existing themes and the challenge statements and add one new theme. The research reports we referenced for domestic workers can be found in the Appendix.

No.	Theme	Challenging Statements
1	Struggles with Living and Working Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How might we redesign the experience of living in dormitories to make workers feel more at home away from home?• How might we draw boundaries on the job scope of a domestic worker to protect their welfare, given that each household's expectations of workers are unique?• How might we ensure that all domestic workers are part of local social networks that provide informal emotional support and access to formal help?
2	Barriers with Access to Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How might we encourage migrant workers with non-injury related medical issues to feel comfortable seeking help?• How might we ensure continuity of care for migrant workers with chronic health conditions when they step out of the medical centre?

3	Social Exclusion of Migrant Voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might we ensure that the voices of migrant workers are included as equal stakeholders in the various touch points they have with Singapore society?
4	High Recruitment Debt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might we document the recruitment process for migrant workers so that we know where to intervene to reduce high recruitment debt? • How might we ensure that all domestic workers have full transparency of what is included in their agent fees?
5	Caregiving Burden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might we accurately assess domestic workers' skills and enhance their capacity to fulfill their caregiving responsibilities?



Photo of our Co-Chairs and Secretariat Team. (From Left): Anthea, Sarah, Michael, Vandhana and Vincent

Selecting a Good Chairperson

Looking back, we think there are several qualities a person needs to be a good Chairperson for a Listening Living Labs, which are listed below:

- This person must be an influential champion. They must be a prominent figure in the issue and if they send a message to 10 key people in this issue asking them to attend a meeting, people will come. Ideally, this person can also make time to actively help with recruiting people to join the collective.
- This person has networks with funders or people who can provide financial support to support the work of the collective and its work-groups.
- This person is able to understand the interests of different stakeholder groups, inspire trust and be strong enough to rally different stakeholder groups to put aside their differences, to work together on the common issue.
- This person must commit to stick with the process until Phase 3 is completed (at least 12 months).
- This person is able to clearly see and charismatically communicate the value-add of the Listening Living Labs process - that different stakeholders coming together can create change that they could not have achieved individually. This clarity and persuasion are critical in rallying people to come for subsequent sessions.

Deliverables to Expect at the End of Phase 0

Ideally, Phase 0 is complete when the following milestones have been accomplished:

- A Chairperson for the Leaders Roundtable has been found. If a suitable Chairperson cannot be found, the Listening Living Labs cannot proceed. Eventually, Anthea (former Nominated Member of Parliament and Founding Chairperson of A Good Space) and Michael (former Executive Director of Healthserve) agreed to be our Co-Chairs for the Listening Living Labs.
- 'Good enough' research has been done to identify the issues, existing solutions and gaps which citizens can start projects around. The research need not be extremely rigorous as the Listening Living Labs and such change work is an iterative process. The Secretariat Team (see next chapter in Phase 1 below) will continue to discover new insights and perspectives along the way. The research just needs to be good enough to attract people to participate.

Reflections on the IAC

Reflecting on our engagement with the IAC, we feel the following areas could have been improved:

1

We could have asked leaders to comment on existing solutions and 'white spaces', instead of commenting on general questions

Instead of asking IAC members to comment on general questions such as "are there other opportunities / ideas you see?" We could have focused more on presenting the existing solutions we found in our research and asked them to comment on their effectiveness or white spaces (e.g. if they knew of existing tech solutions that sought to remove the middleman and therefore reduce agent fees paid by migrant workers, they could tell us what worked and what could be improved).

Some questions we could have asked are:

- What is the effectiveness of existing solutions for these issues?
- Do you see any 'white spaces' that existing solutions may not be addressing?
- What are the key obstacles in our way of doing better on this issue?
- Do you know other communities with creative solutions for similar issues?
- Quick brainstorm: What solutions do you think the People, Private and Public sector can create for this issue?

Such information cannot be easily found via desktop research and requires trust to be built with people involved in those solutions for them to disclose what works and what doesn't. We later discovered that citizens coming forward to form the work-groups may not have the time and bandwidth to do this.

IAC members had a unique vantage point to see and evaluate different existing solutions. Having this information would have helped us avoid work-groups trying out ideas that already exist or have proven to not work. This was a huge value-add the leaders could provide which we did not harness fully. This would likely have led to more meaningful challenge statements being developed, as opposed to having a general discussion about the issues that went in different directions.

2

We could have organised several focus group discussions before convening the IAC

It might be more meaningful if we organised smaller focus group discussions with specific experts and stakeholders for each theme, before forming an IAC to gather different stakeholders with expertise in different themes.

This approach might have given us more time to dive deeper into each theme with people who have expertise in them, as opposed to trying to cover as many themes as possible within the two hours of an IAC meeting but having insufficient time to go deeper. This could have given us some preliminary insights into the questions mentioned above and enable us to formulate some hypotheses which we could present to the IAC, to seek their comments in a more specific way.

3

It is important to select IAC members who can bring an ecosystem view and can commit to future phases of the Listening Living Labs process

Ideally, IAC members should not only have knowledge about the issues, they should also be aware of the ecosystem of support and existing solutions for those issues as well. Sometimes, a person with lived experience (e.g. a migrant worker) might not be able to articulate this ecosystem view. Funders might make good IAC members, especially those who have funded projects for migrant workers. This is because there is a high likelihood they can tell us what the existing solutions are, their effectiveness and if they see potential for more action by citizen work-groups.

Another possible criteria for selecting an IAC member is how interested they will be towards contributing to the next phase of the Listening Living Labs. Ideally, the future Chairperson of the Leaders Roundtable should be an IAC member, so that we don't lose the momentum between Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Design inclusive ways of participation, especially for persons with lived experience

We were very grateful to have two migrant workers, Zakir and Ripon, join us on the IAC despite their long work schedules, which often meant they joined the virtual meetings from their worksites or on the commute back to their dormitories. We tried the following to make it easier for them to participate:

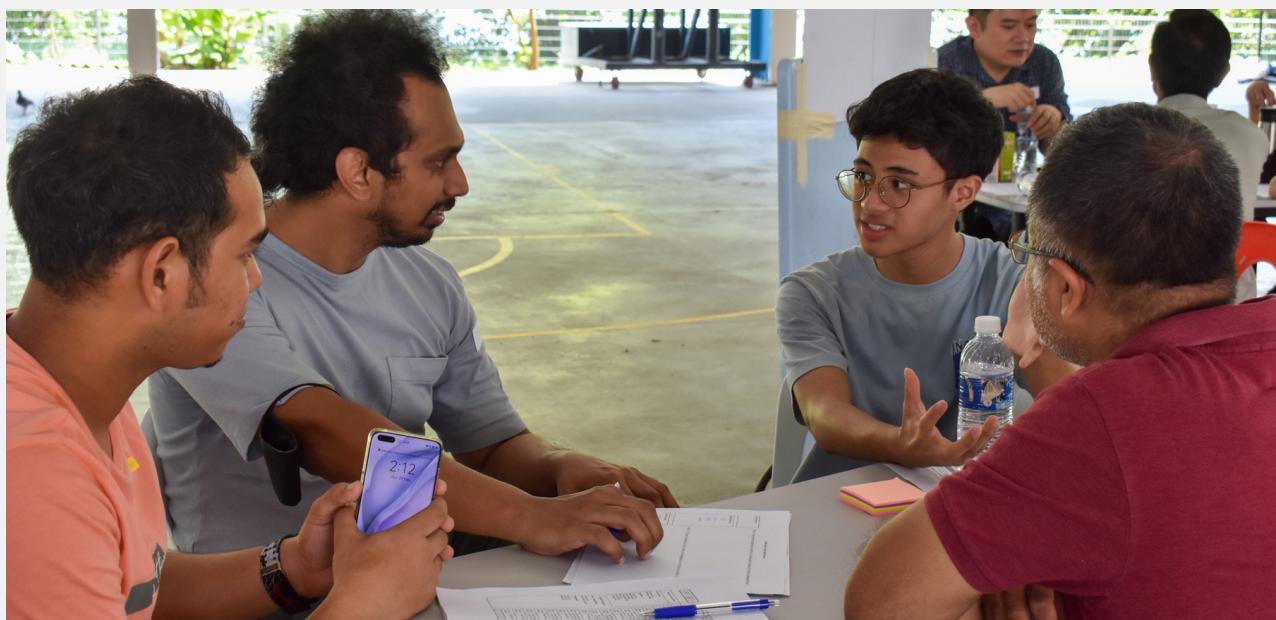
- Starting IAC meetings at 8pm and having them virtually so it was easy for them to join in after work.
- Because their Internet connectivity would be unstable sometimes, we would check in with them during the meeting to ensure they could hear what was being discussed.
- Digital tools like Miro were hard to access on their mobile phones. Therefore, we gave them the option to Whatsapp message their responses / questions / comments or send short voice messages to us so we could convey their perspectives on their behalf during the meetings.



“

There is no more powerful way to initiate significant change than to convene a conversation. When a community of people discovers that they share a concern, change begins. There is no power equal to a community discovering what it cares about

Margaret Wheatley
Co-Founder and President
The Berkana Institute





PHASE 1: SCOPE

- Part 1: Assemble a Secretariat Team
- Part 2: Assemble a Leaders Roundtable
- Part 3: LRT Meeting 1
- Key Reflections from Assembling LRT
- Resources

Part 1: Assemble a Secretariat Team

Before embarking on the work, we established a structure for the collective around four key roles, learning from governance structures outlined in the [Collective Impact Process](#). Creating a structure with clear roles was useful in communicating how people could contribute towards the collective and increase the likelihood of making progress.

This diagram illustrates the structure and roles we defined:



Once we found two suitable Co-Chairs in Anthea and Michael, the next task was to form a Secretariat Team who would do the actual work to drive the Listening Living Labs process. Reflecting on our experience, we think the Secretariat Team should minimally have people who can play these 3 roles:

Secretariat Lead

- Develop and refine the Listening Living Labs process, learning and adapting from methodologies such as Design Thinking, the Collective Impact Process, etc.
- Identify and convince suitable leaders to be the Chairperson and to join the Leaders' Roundtable.
- Meet with representatives of multi-sector stakeholders, ask quality questions to understand their interests and enroll them into participating in the Listening Living Labs.
- Report progress to leaders in the Leaders Roundtable and engage them in the creation of the strategic direction for the Listening Living Labs.
- Design and facilitate each workshop in Phase 2 and meetings of the Leaders Roundtable, aligning the program design to the key objectives identified.
- Write proposals to funders who can help provide funding for the Secretariat Team and work-groups to implement their prototypes.
- Lead external communications of the Listening Living Labs with media outlets, political office holders and government agencies.

Secretariat Researcher

- Conduct landscape reviews and conversations with relevant stakeholders into selected topics (e.g. recruitment debt for migrant workers) to identify: (i) what the issues are and what causes them (ii) what are existing interventions, (iii) what is the effectiveness of existing interventions and (iv) are there any gaps that could be filled with new ideas?
- Conduct research to gather the names and contact details of various multi-sector stakeholders to invite to the workshops in Phase 2
- Take notes at meetings of the Leaders' Roundtable and workshops in Phase 2 and synthesise notes taken into articles that can be published to document the knowledge that is being created by the Listening Living Labs collective.
- Create marketing collaterals (e.g. posters, workshop signup page, social media graphics, etc) required to communicate the vision for the Listening Living Labs and to enroll participants to sign up for the respective workshops in Phase 2.

Secretariat Administrator:

- Schedule and coordinate meetings of the Leaders Roundtable and other meetings with multi-sector stakeholders as required.
- Helps to take care of all logistics requirements of the Listening Living Labs collective (e.g. booking venues for workshops)

Ideally, each role can be taken up by a full-time staff member. Our General Manager Vincent and interns Vandhana and Sarah performed the above duties. In some collective impact projects in North America, member organisations of the collective contribute their staff's time to the Secretariat Team (sort of an in-kind contribution in lieu of providing funding or other resources). In other words, their Secretariat Team is made up of several full-time staff who work for different organisations that make up the collective.

The Backbone Infrastructure

In the Collective Impact Process, the organisation that hosts the Secretariat Team is known as the "Backbone". Sometimes, this organisation might receive funding on behalf of the collective (e.g. for the work-groups to prototype their ideas) or at other times, one of the partners in the collective might serve as the 'fiscal host' to hold the funds for the collective.

This was the role that A Good Space Co-operative played for the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs. We think it would be helpful for a Backbone to have the following characteristics:

- Has strong process facilitation and meeting design skills as it will be designing the different workshops and Leaders Roundtable meetings
- Have the necessary networks and influence to find a Chairperson and be able to earn the trust of the Chairperson to mobilise his / her networks
- (Optional) Be seen as a neutral party and not a stakeholder with a vested interest in the issue. Perhaps this neutrality might help bring people to the table, especially if there is a history of conflict within the sector. In our case, A Good Space could be this neutral party as we did not have a significant history working with migrant workers before the pandemic.

Part 2: Assemble a Leaders Roundtable

After establishing the Secretariat Team, the next thing we did was to identify leaders who could form a Leaders Roundtable (LRT). The leaders of the LRT played the following roles:

- Make warm introductions to important stakeholders so that the Secretariat Team can invite them to attend the workshops. The names of leaders in the LRT should lend credibility to the Listening Living Labs.
- Give feedback to the Secretariat Team on migrant worker issues, existing solutions and potential areas for new ideas to be formed.
- Provide strategic guidance to chart an inspiring vision for a more welcoming Singapore for migrant workers can look like, to rally important stakeholders to come forward and participate in the collective
- Advise work-groups on the feasibility of their ideas and open up their networks / resources to support work-groups with implementing their ideas

While we asked members of the LRT to commit to about 3 hours a month for 12 months (covering Phase 2 and 3), the Collective Impact Process recommends a 14 - 18 month mandate for the LRT to perform the above tasks, ending with writing a 5-year community plan that articulates a collective vision for making Singapore a more welcoming place for migrant workers to work and live in, incorporating lessons learnt from the prototypes implemented by the work-groups.

Selecting Leaders for the LRT

When deciding which leaders to invite for the LRT, we tried to look for people who represented the various stakeholder groups that a migrant worker would interact with, whether they were Construction, Marine and Process (CMP) workers or domestic workers. In particular, we hoped to have people from the following profiles:

- **Government / Public Sector** - someone from the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) so that we can have a deeper understanding into existing government policies, interventions and initiatives for migrant workers and domestic workers. This information would be extremely useful so that work-groups can align their initiatives to the government's strategy for more resources and implementation support.

- **Business Sector** - someone who could represent the voice of employers, dormitory operators or employment agents - three very important stakeholders that CMP migrant workers would interact with for a large part of their time in Singapore. They would be able to give us a perspective into issues such as recruitment debt, healthcare access and mental stressors for migrant workers and domestic workers.
- **Funder / Philanthropic Sector** - we intentionally wanted to involve a funder right from the start so that they feel invested in building the outcomes of the Listening Living Labs together, which could lead to a higher chance of them funding the prototypes that are developed or the Secretariat Team to do the work. In our experience, having funding support is a crucial element in encouraging people to come forward and we think this is a crucial person to have on board before the Listening Living Labs process can proceed.
- **Non-Profit / Community Sector** - we wanted the Director of a non-profit organisation serving migrant workers or domestic workers, so they could share their initiatives, the lessons they have learnt on what works and what can be improved from running these initiatives. This could also be the leader of a ground-up movement with significant experience and interaction with workers. Or someone from the Migrant Workers Centre (MWC) or the Centre for Domestic Employees (CDE).
- **Lived Experience** - we wanted either a migrant worker or domestic worker. Because this was the group we wanted the work-groups to design their solutions with, their input would be critical in ensuring that meaningful solutions are developed.
- **Academia / Research** - we wanted someone who has authored research papers on either migrant or domestic workers in Singapore. This person may also have knowledge on migrant worker policies and interventions abroad, which could serve as inspiration for the work-groups as they develop their solutions.

Most importantly, we also tried to invite people who are influential in the migrant worker space. We defined 'influential' as: If they ask key stakeholders to participate in the workshops or share resources with the collective, would 10 people say yes? This was a very important factor in giving the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs some legitimacy and credibility to attract people to come forward.

Beyond influence, leaders in the LRT must be passionate about the issue and keen to help make positive change happen. They must not have their 'own agenda' but rather, be able to be curious and strive for the greater good.

Templates for Inviting Leaders to Join the LRT

We reached out to different leaders using an email, attaching a one-pager explaining our objectives for the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs. This one-pager was later used to invite participants to join the workshops in Phase 2. The format we used when creating the one-pager was:

- Who is A Good Space Co-operative?
- What is the change for migrant workers that we wish to see?
- What are we doing to create this change?
- How can they contribute?

**LISTENING LIVING LABS
WITH MIGRANT WORKERS**

A NEW INITIATIVE BY **A GOOD SPACE.**

Our Story

In Feb 2020, our Founding Chairperson Anthea Ong and changemaker member Abhishek Bajaj gathered changemakers in the migrant worker space to create graphics encouraging employers to take proactive steps to support their domestic helpers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

When infection clusters broke out in migrant worker dormitories, this group started an emergency response to deliver masks, food and other essentials to workers stuck in dormitories across Singapore. It was the first time that NGOs and ground-up movements in the migrant worker space collaborated at such a large scale.

Through these efforts, we learnt that the issues faced by our migrant brothers and sisters are complex and can't be solved by a single organization alone.

Issues Identified: 5 Key Challenges Faced by Migrant Workers

We read various research reports and spoke to representatives from dormitory operators, academics, doctors, NGOs, employers and migrant workers themselves. They helped us identify key issues they felt were valuable to start with:

01 High Recruitment Debt	02 Barriers of Access to Healthcare	03 Struggles with Living & Working Conditions	04 Social exclusion of migrant voices	05 Caregiver burden
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Our Vision: Singapore - a welcoming place for migrant workers to work and live

In the last two years of the pandemic, there have been various efforts that have moved things forward for migrant workers. We want to build on these efforts by gathering multi-sector stakeholders to listen to each other, find common ground and commit to working together to create longer term change around the vision of:

What needs to happen for Singapore to be a welcoming place for migrant workers to work and live in?

Through the Listening Living Labs, we will gather a diverse group of stakeholders in a multi-year process to generate ideas to address these challenges and act on them together to create longer-term change, through a multi-sectoral, collaborative approach.

Our Process

1. Form a Leaders Roundtable (LRT) on 24 April (brain icon)

2. Host a multi-stakeholder Listening Circle on May 22 - Aug 22 (lightbulb icon)

3. Ideation process begins, leading to workgroups formed on Sep 22 - Apr 23 (briefcase icon)

4. Workgroups prototype ideas for 6 months (gear icon)

5. LRT drafts a 5-year community plan on Apr 23 - Apr 28 (checklist icon)

6. Sign-off and launch of 5-year community plan (checkmark icon)

How You Can Get Involved

- **As a Funder:** You help fund the course of the Listening Living Labs process (e.g. venue hire, logistics) and/or fund resources for the workgroups that will be launched
- **As a Work-Group Participant:** You care about migrant worker issues and want to work on projects with multi-sector stakeholders to create meaningful change.
- **As a Resource Person:** You can share knowledge regarding the challenges and strengths of migrant workers, and/or you can connect us with relevant resources and organisations

About Us

A Good Space is Singapore's first co-operative set up to convene diverse changemakers to work on social issues together. We currently have 32 members representing 15 different social issues and communities. We are united by the belief that together, we can do more for the issues we care about than we can do alone.

To get involved in the Listening Living Labs, or for partnerships, funding, and other related enquiries, please drop us an email at livinglabs@agoodspace.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

Let's build a more welcoming Singapore for migrant workers to work and live in, together.

Screenshot of the one-pager we sent

Eventually, the following leaders made up the LRT for the Migrant Worker Listening Living Labs:



Anthea Ong

**Former Nominated Member of Parliament and Founding Chairperson
A Good Space Co-operative**

With her 30 years leadership experience in the non-profit and for-profit sectors, Anthea could bring leadership skills that were crucial in forming the LRT and charting a strategic direction for the Listening Living Labs collective. As an NMP, she asked questions about migrant worker issues in Parliament and helped to convene civil society and non-profit groups to provide emergency relief for workers at the onset of the pandemic. This enabled her to form relationships with key officers within MOM, which would be very useful later in securing their participation and inputs in the Listening Living Labs process.



Michael Cheah

**Former Executive Director
Healthserve**

Through his work with Healthserve, Michael had deep experience with migrant workers in issues relating to their health, mental well-being, work injuries and more. His work also enabled him to form relationships with representatives from employers, dormitory operators, government agencies, non-profit organisations and migrant workers themselves, which came in handy later on during the workshops. Michael had also participated in similar collectives that sought to gather different partners to work together on migrant worker issues and could advise us on the design of the Listening Living Labs process.



Charles Tan

**Director, Philanthropy
The Majority Trust**

The Majority Trust (TMT) had produced the *Building Bridges* report and Charles could bring important insights into the social integration of migrant workers with locals from the findings of that report. Furthermore, as one of the few funders of migrant worker projects through their Scaffold Fund, Charles could share lessons he observed from these projects, which would be very useful for the work-groups later on. TMT could also potentially fund the Listening Living Labs and the prototypes created by the work-groups.



Charanjeet Singh
General Manager
TS Group

Living in a dormitory is a large part of a migrant worker's experience here in Singapore and Charanjeet could share valuable insights into issues they face from his vantage point as a dormitory operator. He could also provide a location and access to migrant workers for the work-groups to try out their prototypes with.



Tony Bin
Former CEO
Centurion Properties

Similar to Charanjeet, Tony could share valuable insights into the issues that migrant workers face from his vantage point as a dormitory operator. He also had prior experiences working with employers of the workers, enabling him to share their perspectives towards migrant worker issues that would be helpful for the work-groups in designing their prototypes later on.



Dinesh Dhillon
Law Society's Pro Bono Services

The Law Society's Pro Bono Services had experience supporting workers with legal challenges and Dinesh could share perspectives from this vantage point which can help us gain even more holistic appreciation of the issues and challenges faced by both migrant and domestic workers.



Bhing Navato
Domestic Worker and Volunteer
Humanitarian Organisations for Migration Economics (HOME)

As a domestic worker here for almost 28 years, Bhing has deep lived experience of the issues faced by domestic workers and their aspirations. She also has experience volunteering for HOME's crisis hotline, which gives her an invaluable insight into factors that affect a domestic worker's well being and what their challenges are. An accomplished poet herself, Bhing is also involved with many migrant-local arts groups, which gives her access to domestic workers who can participate or give feedback to the work-groups when creating their prototypes.



Zakir Hossain*
Migrant Worker and Founder
Migrant Writers' Singapore

As a migrant worker in Singapore since 2003, Zakir has deep lived experience of the issues faced by migrant workers and their aspirations. An accomplished poet and writer, he is connected to many migrant-local arts groups, which gives him access to migrant workers who can participate or give feedback to the work-groups when creating their prototypes.

** Zakir served in the LRT until May 2022, when he went home to Bangladesh after his work permit expired.*



K. Jayaprema
President
Association of Employment Agencies

As an Employment Agent for over 20 years, Jayaprema can bring important insights into the challenges and aspirations of both domestic workers and their employers. As the President of the Association of Employment Agencies, she has a deep understanding of policies relating to domestic workers and has nurtured important relationships with key officers in MOM over the years, which is useful for the work-groups in designing their prototypes.

Part 3: LRT Meeting 1:

13 April 2022

Once the LRT was formed, we organised a first meeting to help them understand the Listening Living Labs process, how they can contribute and to scope an overall challenge statement that will set the collective's strategic direction. The objectives of this meeting were:

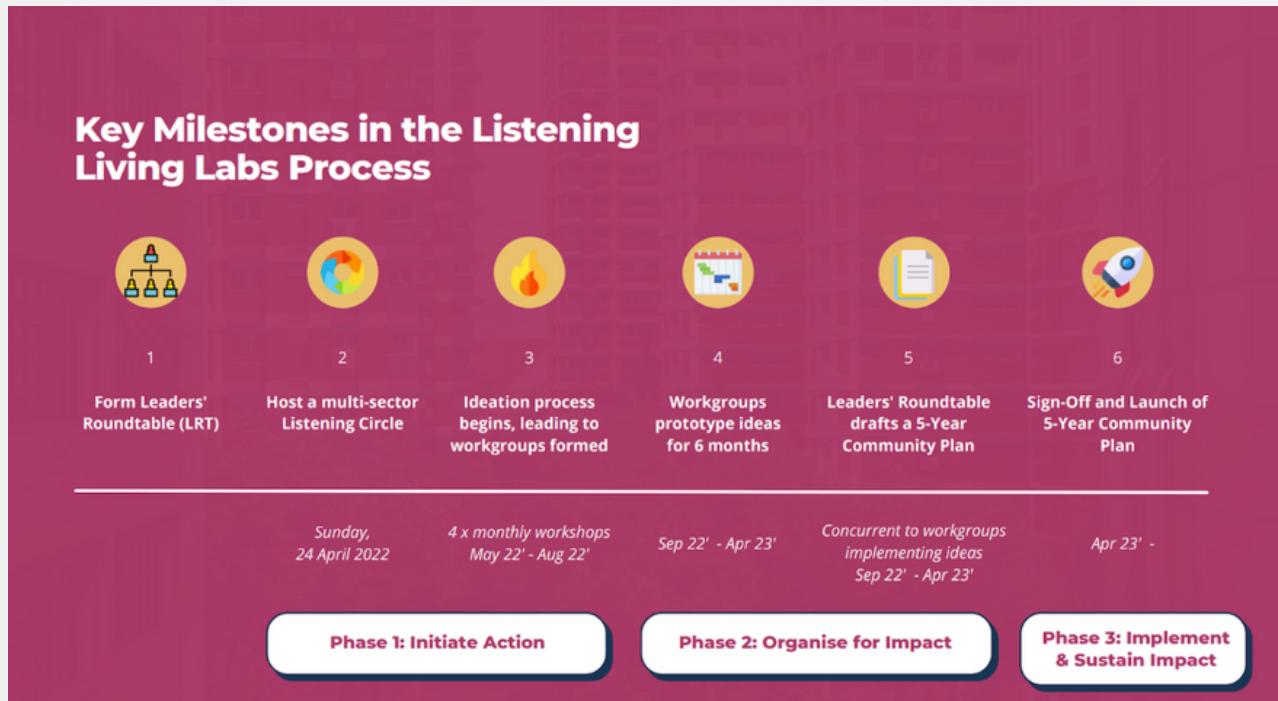
- Help LRT members to understand the key insights and challenge statements created from the IAC meetings, the Listening Living Labs process, their role in it and what the expected commitment will be.
- Refine the main vision statement that will set the collective's strategic direction and be put out to gather multi-sector stakeholders in the workshops in Phase 2.
- Tap on the networks of LRT members to reach out to key persons and stakeholders to attend the first workshop (Listening Circle) in Phase 2.
- Create shared values that will be practiced by leaders during meetings of the LRT and members of the collective during the workshops in Phase 2.

Introduction to Insights, Challenge Statements and the role of Leaders in the LRT

We started by presenting the following:

- The journey we had taken so far such as reading the research reports and engaging the IAC to surface insights and challenge statements
- What is the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs and how does it align with similar efforts in the space over the past year such as NVPC's Migrant Worker CoLabs?
- The key responsibilities of the LRT being to help recruit people in their sector to join the workshops in Phase 2
- The estimated time commitment of an LRT member to be: (i) participating in monthly meetings, each about 2 hours, (ii) review reading materials when necessary, about 1 hour and (iii) be part of the LRT for at least 12 months to see through Phase 2 and 3 to draft a 5-year community plan

The leaders agreed with the insights and challenge statements created by the IAC and were excited to start putting them out to invite multi-sector stakeholders to act on them.



Screenshot of a slide we used to explain the Listening Living Labs process

Refining the Main Vision Statement

Before the meeting, we had created a main vision statement that signifies the highest aspiration of the Listening Living Labs: "How might we make Singapore the best place for migrant workers to work and live in?" This main challenge statement would be used as the North Star to guide the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs and as a rallying call for stakeholders to participate in Phase 2.

We asked each leader to share their response towards this statement in two rounds:

- **Listening Round** - we asked each leader to take 1 min to share how they felt about the vision statement without responding to each other
- **Proposal Round** - we asked leaders to propose any specific changes to the vision statement they would like to make after hearing each other's opinions in the Listening Round.

Learning from [consent-based decision making models](#) used in Sociocracy, the idea was not to land on a vision statement we could 100% agree on, but to find something we can accept and have no strong objections to.

Eventually, the LRT refined the main vision statement to: "How might we make Singapore a more welcoming place for migrant workers to work and live in?" In arriving at this main vision statement, the LRT had the following considerations:

- The vision statement should be something that other stakeholders like employers, dormitory operators and government agencies can rally around; not just NGOs and migrant workers.
- Being the best at something is difficult and subjective, because every country's circumstances are different. The word 'welcoming' lays the right emotional foundation and there is a higher chance that employers and other stakeholders can resonate with this. It is also broad enough to encompass the 5 themes we had identified and allow for a range of solutions.
- Define migrant workers as both male workers in the Construction, Marine, Process sectors and female domestic workers.

Strategies to Engage Employers

Employers are an important stakeholder but we had struggled to invite them to participate in the LRT and foresee difficulties engaging them later on in Phase 2. Many shared that although they care about the well-being of their workers, they had to prioritise the survival of their business with the limited time they had. We asked LRT members to share:

- What are some ideas they have for engaging employers?
- What resources or networks can they contribute to help invite employers to participate in the workshops in Phase 2?

Creating Values for the LRT and Collective

For the LRT to be effective, one of the most important things to do from the start is to create a safe and brave space - a space where we feel safe to share our perspectives and be brave to be willing to listen to perspectives that are different and might challenge our own.

We invited leaders to share one thing they need to feel safe to share their perspectives with fellow members of the LRT using Mentimeter. With their input, we created a simple values document that served as a reminder of the values we can uphold whenever we come together as an LRT. The values we gleaned from their responses were:

- Respect
- Listen
- Presence
- Curiosity
- Inclusion

Key Reflections from Assembling LRT

1

Should the LRT help with implementation beyond giving advice?

Initially, we had framed the LRT's involvement like a Steering Committee that meets once a month to give advice to the Secretariat Team. The Collective Impact Process advises for leaders in the LRT to help lead part of the implementation (e.g. convincing people they know to attend beyond connecting us or pledge some staff time / funds from their organisation to the collective).

It further explains that the Backbone includes both the LRT and staff from the Secretariat Team, who have to be senior enough to hold the LRT members accountable to contribute, not just leaving this role to the Chairperson. While this might be difficult because the leaders would be busy, it remains an ideal to aspire towards.

2

Engage the business sector only when there are concrete ideas for how they can participate?

We struggled to get an employer of migrant workers to participate in the LRT, despite having direct contacts through Anthea and Michael. This could be due to a variety of factors, for example: (i) employers were prioritising survival of their business with the limited time they had, (ii) we lacked credibility as a citizen's effort, (iii) businesses don't prefer to come for discussion and ideation, but may be more accepting to participate when there are concrete ideas they can comment and give feedback on. Perhaps they could be better engaged when the work-groups have formed and developed clear prototypes.

When engaging stakeholders from the business sector, it is important to consider the invitation from their perspective: what is in it for them to attend and what do they stand to lose if they don't attend? Admittedly, our invitation was not strong on both these fronts and this, coupled with the fact that we didn't have as much credibility as a government-led effort, led to our inability to get someone from the business sector.

An optimal size for leaders in the LRT is 10

The Collective Impact Process advises a minimum LRT size of 6 and maximum of 10, so that there can be diversity of perspectives and experiences but not too many such that finding common ground and decision-making is difficult. When we secured 9 leaders, we made an intentional decision that it was good enough to go ahead.

We realized that we couldn't wait for conditions to be perfect - they will never be. At some point, we just decide to go ahead and add leaders from the other sectors we missed further down the journey or find another way to get their input.

Alternative way of writing a one-pager

We could have added the following information about the readiness for collective action to address migrant worker issues:

- Describe briefly the history of collaboration in the migrant worker space (e.g. collective of migrant efforts to distribute food, masks and essential supplies to workers stuck in dormitories during the pandemic) and map out where these fit on the Collaboration Spectrum
- Highlight some leaders who have agreed to participate (such as leaders in the LRT) and share quotes from them to encourage greater participation
- Share examples of specific gaps in migrant worker issues we think this collective can do something about - go beyond mapping current solutions to defining 'white spaces' (e.g. supporting workers whose companies have gone bankrupt to find jobs to stay in Singapore)
- We could also have asked: (i) Are these the right areas to focus on? (ii) What other ideas do you think should be considered? (iii) Can you help to prioritise areas where action is most needed? This would have given them some impetus to reply to tell us what they think, fostering a sense of ownership in the issue and increasing the chances of them coming forward to participate in the collective.

Precious time was lost in between the IAC and LRT

From the last IAC meeting in October 2021 to the formation of the LRT in March 2022 and its first meeting in April, almost 6 months had gone by - precious time and momentum that was lost. This delay was because of a few reasons: (i) not all IAC members were able to continue serving in the LRT so we had to find new members and (ii) we were reading up on the Collective Impact process and trying to chart out what the role of the LRT would be and what the workshops in Phase 2 would look like, so that we could explain it to prospective members of the LRT.

Resources

Leadership Styles for Success in Collaborative Work
W. Roger Miller and Jeffrey P. Miller

INTRODUCTION

Environmental advocacy organizations work in coalition or strategic partnerships with other organizations with similar missions to a wide variety of issues. As with many other nonprofits, foundations are a major source of funding for environmental advocacy organizations. In these tight economic times, foundation funders also commonly call for advocacy nonprofits to think more like businesses. In response, many advocacy nonprofits have adopted a business model. Foundations ask potential grantees is "with whom are you working?" It is imperative that advocacy nonprofits have a clear understanding of the partners they are working with, and together have the staff or the financial resources to successfully achieve their goals without necessarily engaging other groups in the effort.

Many environmental groups create intra-sector alliances with other environmental groups or cross-sector alliances with other environmental groups, including government agencies and for-profit entities. While there are many advantages and disadvantages to each type of alliance, environmental advocacy organizations are well positioned to benefit from cross-sector alliances. The authors describe collaboration as an "artistic act among non-consulting adults," which emphasizes the effectiveness of the process over the outcome.

Leadership in cross-sector and intra-sector collaborations crosses many boundaries and is fundamentally different from position-based leadership authority or tactical-level leadership exercised by a single individual. It is a leadership style that emphasizes relationship-based leadership in many ways, such as the emphasis on leading the collaborative process.

Chrisp & Larson's study on collaborative leadership indicate that collaborative leaders usually have no formal power or authority and tend to exert influence through relationships. The authors state, "Collaborative leaders have a different focus from other kinds of leadership – promoting and protecting the interests of the group as a whole, rather than the interests of the individual." Examples include "keeping stakeholders at the table through periods of frustration and skepticism, acknowledging the importance of the other party's interests, and being open to new ideas, positions, and enforcing group norms and ground rules" (p. 130).

If this is true, there must be a set of leadership styles that are unique to success in collaboration and these leadership styles must be adopted by the leaders of the organization. Other research on the development of the nonprofit sector points out the key role that executive directors play in the development of successful collaborations. Executive directors of successful environmental nonprofit organizations can utilize specific leadership styles to advance their organizations' missions through collaboration, which styles and leadership actions are the most important? This study asked leaders of environmental nonprofits to collaborate on this question. The findings indicate that the organizations which the leadership styles described in the literature are actually confirmed by their experiences.

Leadership Styles for Success in Collaborative Work |

W. Roger Miller and Jeffrey P. Miller
Paper

This paper by W. Roger Miller and Jeffrey P. Miller explores the challenges and traits of successful non-profit collaborative partnerships, including: contingency leadership, transactional leadership, traditional leadership, charismatic leadership, transformational leadership, servant leadership.

Sociocracy For All

Consent decision making

How does consent decision making work? Check out our explanation.

Introduction

The way we make decisions

In an autocratic system, one or a few people make a decision. Autocracy is a very simple way of making a decision (at least in the short run). It is also fast. However, this is a challenge to success of the organization. Other research on the development of the nonprofit sector points out the key role that executive directors play in the development of successful collaborations. Executive directors of successful environmental nonprofit organizations can utilize specific leadership styles to advance their organizations' missions through collaboration, which styles and leadership actions are the most important? This study asked leaders of environmental nonprofits to collaborate on this question. The findings indicate that the organizations which the leadership styles described in the literature are actually confirmed by their experiences.

Consent Based Decision Making Models |

Sociocracy For All
Article

This article describes the key concepts in consent-based decision making, a way to make decisions while ensuring everyone feels valued and listened to, including: (i) range of tolerance, (ii) objections and (iii) the consent decision making process.

TAMARACK INSTITUTE

TOOL | Collaborative Governance Framework

The backbone infrastructure of a Collective Impact effort is focused on six core roles. These roles, partners, & strategies support aligned activities, established shared measurements, build public will, advance policy and, mobilize funding. An in-depth study of successful backbone in 1950, revealed three strengths in backbone organizations: clarity of purpose, in-depth analysis of strategy and supporting aligned activities; backbone organizations shift focus over time, need ongoing assistance with data, research, communications, building public will, and advancing policy.

Key Questions

The core elements of collaborative structure and governance include:

- A shared vision through a backbone
- Managing overlapping roles in the governance structure
- A backbone organization with staff
- Executive or Coordinating Committee
- A clear role for the backbone
- There is not one right answer for how to set up a collaborative structure. It is shaped by the following factors: local context, member interests, and the nature of the leadership.
- The group is making satisfactory progress.
- Data is being collected and analyzed.
- Everyone involved is learning much about the complex issue and the market process as well as having a greater sense of and respect for the initiative.

Collaborative Governance Principles

- Shared Vision
- Take place in the public eye
- Inclusiveness
- All interests who are involved and willing contribute to the solution
- Decisions made are based on the best available information
- Decisions made are timely
- Decisions made are consistent with practical timeframes
- Decisions made are consistent with the mission
- Fairness/Negotiation: Different perspectives are considered and respected
- Common Benefit: Decisions are made through consensus rather than majority rule

Collaborative Governance Framework |

Tamarack Institute
Tool

This tool illustrates the six core roles in the backbone infrastructure of a Collective Impact effort: (i) guide vision and strategy, (ii) support aligned activities, (iii) establish shared measurements, (iv) build public will, (v) advance policy and (vi) mobilise funding.



Click on either the image or the underlined words to access the respective resources!

“

To make a difference in our community, we must begin by naming the existing context and evolving to a way of thinking that leads to new conversations that produce a new context. Every time we gather has the potential to become a model of the future we want to create.

Peter Block

Community: The Structure of Belonging





PHASE 2: LISTEN & IDEATE

- Workshop 1: Listening Circle
- Workshop 2: Ideation
- Workshop 3: Internal Feedback
- Workshop 4: A Good Pitch
- Key Reflections for Workshop 1 -4
- Overall Reflections
- Resources

Workshop 1

Listening Circle



**24 April 2022
1.00pm - 5.00pm
Terusan Recreation Centre**

To tackle a complex issue, it's important to involve diverse stakeholders who may have different views on the issue and solutions - everyone has a piece of the truth. Therefore, we wanted to design a generative conversation that enables people to listen to understand, rather than listen to respond.

This workshop was inspired by the Top 100 Gathering by Tamarack Institute, where they invite 25 stakeholders each from the Business, Government, Community and Non-Profit sectors, thus forming 100 stakeholders.

The goal of the Listening Circle was to build on comprehensive research and dialogues hosted in the 2 years of the pandemic to convene multi-sector stakeholders to have a future-oriented discussion on how we can collectively address the challenges faced by migrant workers in Singapore.

In designing for the workshop, we wanted to achieve the following objectives:

- Present our research and the five key issues identified to invite multi-sector stakeholder groups to build on this research and identify opportunities for action
- Invite participants to brainstorm ideas around the vision statement: "what needs to happen for Singapore to be a more welcoming place for migrant workers to work and live in?". These ideas can be further developed in the next workshop.
- Gather a sense of the roles that participants would like to play in the Listening Living Labs moving forward (eg. as workgroup participants, resource persons, etc.)

Inviting Key Stakeholders

We used several methods to invite representatives from key stakeholder groups to attend, including:

Asking LRT Leaders for Their Contacts

From these, we managed to gather about 25 people we could directly contact.

Ask LRT Co-Chairs for Their Contacts

Both Anthea and Michael had direct contacts of people from different stakeholder groups within the migrant worker space, because of their work during the pandemic. Such warm introductions significantly increased the response rate we received - it is crucial for the Chairperson(s) of the LRT to have an extensive network whom they can mobilize.

Receive Public Signups

We listed the event on sites like Eventbrite and Peatix, for members of the public to register. We also sent an email to the AGS mailing list with 2,400 subscribers to explain why migrant worker issues were important, why they should care and invited them to register.

Word-Of-Mouth

Through our research and IAC meetings in Phase 0, we befriended many changemakers in the migrant worker space, who later helped connect us to other changemakers and stakeholders they knew. In particular, two changemakers Kari and Nicholas helped us to connect to dormitory operators, which we had been struggling with.

Eventual Outcome

Some people replied to request for a call to better understand what we were trying to achieve before they agreed to participate. These calls took about 45 minutes each. While we didn't manage to get 100 people to come, we did manage to gather 50 participants representing important stakeholder groups such as migrant workers, dormitory operators, academics, employment agencies and non-profit organisations.

Key Design Elements

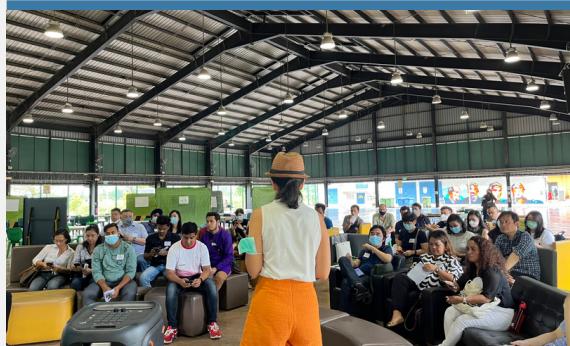
In designing the workshop, we included the following key components:



Pre-assign participants into groups containing people from other stakeholder groups

We asked participants to indicate the stakeholder they most identified with when they signed up on the registration page for the Listening Circle. Some could identify with multiple stakeholder groups, such as an employer who also volunteers at a non-profit for migrant workers.

We asked them to pick the one that most resonated with them and used this information to put them in groups with people from other stakeholder groups. This also signified a core principle of the Listening Living Labs - that because these are complex issues, any discussion or action will be more effective if we consider the viewpoints of different stakeholders.



Context setting - why organise the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs?

Anthea and Michael introduced themselves, the LRT and their roles as Co-Chairs. In particular, they covered the following points to set the context for the MWL3:

- Why organise a MWL3? - to build on the many research and discussion efforts over the past 2 years to take action to create change, together.
- Why now? - build on the momentum of collaboration between different stakeholders, national attention on migrant worker issues and groundswell of citizen efforts during the pandemic before it fades away.

- Call for a **brave space** - acknowledge possible power imbalance between migrant workers and other stakeholders in the room and invite participants to create both a safe and brave space so that everyone feels comfortable to share their experience and ideas and also embraces risk to potentially change their perspective.
- Listen to understand rather than listen to respond - instead of trying to convince each other that our views are right, we listen to each other, even to views which may be different from our own. We practice being cooperators rather than combatants and recognize that we are all on the same team because we want the best for our migrant workers, even when we may differ in how we think we should go about it.



Connection activities + shared values

We started with an icebreaker for participants to find one person they did not know and take 5 minutes to share their response to the question: "what is a significant moment in your life that you'd like to introduce yourself with?" After each person had shared, we invited them to reflect back to each other: "what is one strength you observed as you listened to your partner?"

This activity was useful to build rapport amongst participants ahead of the group discussions later on. We also shared the values (Respect, Listen, Presence, Curiosity and Inclusion) the LRT had created that would guide our interactions with each other and invited participants to share how they could practice these values today.



Recap of key issues faced by migrant workers in Singapore

We gave a short presentation on the 5 key issues which we uncovered during our desktop research, IAC meetings and conversations with other leaders in the migrant worker space. The key issues identified were: high recruitment debt; struggles with living and working conditions; barriers of access to healthcare; social exclusion of migrant workers and caregiver burden. This helped set the purpose for the workshop - to get people across different stakeholder groups to comment on our research and identify insights we had missed.



Discussion 1: Multi-sector groups expand on research

Participants were grouped into multi-stakeholder groups and randomly assigned one of the 5 issues. Each group then selected a Leader and Note-taker. While some issues may have been foreign to them, it is precisely this unfamiliarity and a step outside of their comfort zone that can brew fresh perspectives that may be sorely missing from the changemaking space. In their groups, we asked participants to start by using post-its to quickly brainstorm:

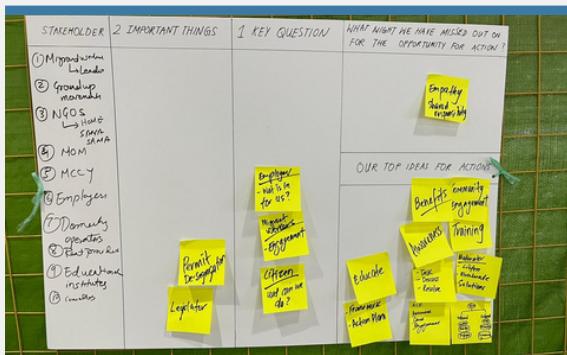
- Who are the key stakeholders in this issue? Each person in the group then takes on the role of one of the stakeholders identified.
- What are the two things that are important to this stakeholder about this issue?
- What is one key question this stakeholder might ask when they think about actions that will address this issue?

Once this brainstorming was complete, the Chair facilitated a discussion where each person shared what they wrote, with the note-taker documenting the discussion. In wrapping up, each person was invited to brainstorm: "When thinking about opportunities for action, what might we have missed?"



Large group shareback

Each group sent one rep to share the highlights from their conversation. The prompt we used was: "In two minutes or less, share something you feel people absolutely need to know from what was discussed in your group."



Discussion 2: Multi-sector groups brainstorm ideas

In their groups, we asked participants to:

- Brainstorming Round - In silence, brainstorm 3 ideas to address the issue they were assigned to earlier that can be tested in 6 months
- Reaction Round - Take turns for each group member to share their 3 ideas. At the end of each group member's sharing, invite the other members to offer one suggestion to improve the idea. At this point, the intention isn't to discuss whether the idea is feasible but to build on each other's ideas.
- Discussion Round - the Group Leader facilitates a discussion on: "which idea stood out most for us and why?"



Large group shareback

Just like the previous large group shareback, each group sent one rep to share the ideas that stood out most for them during the discussion.



Asking for contributions

To close, we asked participants to complete a Contribution Form to indicate how they'd like to participate moving forward, whether as a resource person, be part of a work-group, etc. We were encouraged to see almost 40% of participants indicating interest to participate in a work-group - the most active form of involvement in the MWL3 process.

Key Reflections

Improving Our Design

Looking back, we are grateful to have representatives from every major stakeholder in the migrant worker space present at the Listening Circle. However, we could have better harnessed their wisdom, experience and ideas. In particular, we think our design can be improved in the following ways:

1

Remove ideation and focus Workshop 1 on identifying gaps in perspectives and mapping existing solutions we have missed

Instead of asking multi-sector groups to discuss who the key stakeholders in the issue are and what might be important to them as we did in Discussion #1, we could have used more specific prompts; such as: (i) what other insight(s) do you have about these issues that haven't been captured?, (ii) what are existing solutions that address these issues you know of which we have missed?

Discussion #2 can be about identifying gaps not covered by existing solutions and refining challenge statements. We could use the prompts: (i) are there any gaps you see which aren't being covered by existing solutions? And (ii) so you see new challenge statements that need to be added? We could also have given a quick crash course on how to create a good challenge statement.

This would set up a good foundation from which more meaningful ideas can be generated in Workshop 2, reducing the likelihood of ideas that already exist or have proven to not work.

2

Research presented can be more specific to support the discussions

Originally, we presented general statistics, brief information about existing solutions and challenge statements for each of the five migrant worker themes we chose (see screenshot below for a sample of the research we presented for the issue of "high recruitment debt"). This was not detailed enough for a productive discussion because different people in the group had different levels of background knowledge.

<p>01</p> <h3>HIGH RECRUITMENT DEBT</h3>  <p>Key Finding 1:</p> <p>There are complex social relations between migrant workers and the various agents/middlemen they encounter during the recruitment process that need to be understood better.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agents can be anyone from family, friends, neighbours, former and current migrant workers to formal recruiters in the manpower business. The existence of informal social ties between agents and workers may result in workers having to fulfil certain social obligations when they seek an agent's help, making it more difficult for them to refuse paying higher agent fees. The role of the agent is also not clear. Does the agent help sort out the skilled workers from the rest or just select workers who can pay the highest fees? <p>Current Initiatives that address high recruitment debt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring ethical recruitment of workers by employers through initiatives such as the Employer Certification Scheme by Asian Philanthropy Circle or by choosing to hire workers directly from source countries. Creation of alternative systems and services that bypass middlemen such as Sama which utilizes technology to match workers to employers and get employers to bear recruitment costs. <p>Opportunity Statement:</p> <p>How might we document the recruitment process for migrant workers so we know where to intervene to reduce high recruitment debt?</p>	<p>04</p> <h3>SOCIAL EXCLUSION OF MIGRANT VOICES</h3>  <p>Key Finding 2:</p> <p>Migrant workers need to feel included at all regular day-to-day touch points with Singapore society.</p> <p>These are some barriers to the social inclusion of migrant workers at all touch points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The negative stereotypes and misrepresentations of migrant workers in public discourse. There is no common understanding amongst different stakeholders about what the level of social inclusion of migrant workers in Singapore should be. The transient nature of migrant workers and their labour. The distant housing locations of migrant workers away from residential estates and neighbourhoods. <p>Current Initiatives to include migrant workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> These initiatives attempt to increase opportunities for migrant workers and the rest of Singapore society to interact with each other: COVID-19 Migrant Support Coalition (CMSC), Sama Sama, WIMBY, Migrant X Me and Migrant Writers of Singapore. These initiatives aim to showcase the talents, skills and unique lives of migrant workers: Migrant Writers of Singapore, Sama Sama and WIMBY and the Migrant Workers Poetry Competition. <p>Opportunity Statement:</p> <p>How might we ensure that the voices of migrant workers are included as equal stakeholders in the various touch points they have with Singapore society?</p>
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Screenshot of the research summaries we had prepared and disseminated to each multi-sector group to support their discussions

Instead, what we could have done was to present the following: (using the issue of "high recruitment debt" as an example).

- Key issues within high recruitment debt - why does it arise and who is affected. Beyond statistics, we could also include anecdotes from migrant workers or sector leaders.
- Existing solutions that seek to address these issues (e.g. tech platforms like Sama) and a summarised commentary on the effectiveness of these solutions. Perhaps we could even include solutions that have been tried outside of Singapore - this could serve as inspiration especially when people might feel stuck.
- Potential gaps not covered by existing solutions that we see (e.g. workers who are already in Singapore and pay an informal agent fee to transfer employers or workers whose companies have gone bust and need to find a job urgently)

This information could also have been disseminated to participants beforehand as a pre-read and could have helped further improve the quality of the discussions.

3

The multi-sector group discussions need to be facilitated

Because we lacked resources, we asked each group to appoint a group leader to self-facilitate the multi-sector group discussions. This worked in some groups but was ineffective in others as we ended up having different conversations going on at the same time within the group. Some people wanted to talk more about the issue, some wanted to share how they felt, some wanted to discuss the effectiveness of existing solutions while others wanted to generate ideas - all within 45 minutes!

What we could have done was to get LRT members to serve as a neutral facilitator of the conversation within each multi-sector group and bring people back to talking about missing perspectives they see and possible areas of intervention, rather than jumping to solutions and ideas.

4

Instead of presenting our research through PowerPoint, we could have used a Data Walk (see resource section below)

We could have set up 5 stations - one for each migrant worker theme. Each station would contain some data points (e.g. 52% of Singaporean respondents perceived that crime rates had increased due to migrant workers and 53% perceived that migrant workers threaten our country's culture and heritage) and key insights (e.g. The International Labour Organisation recommends targeted interventions directed at influencer groups such as schools to raise awareness of migrant worker contributions to the economy to counter negative stereotypes).

Each station could contain 3 discussion questions: one to generate people's initial reactions to the data, the second being a focused reflection question based on the data and the third to invite further reflection and exploration. For example, the questions we could have used are:

- What strikes you (both positive and negative) about the data / insights?
- What are some factors that might influence social inclusion of migrant workers?
- What questions do these data / insights raise for you?



Instead of randomly assigning multi-sector groups to an issue, we should have allowed them to pick the issue they wanted to discuss

We randomly assigned multi-sector groups to an issue to make sure that each of the 5 issues were covered. While this could mean that not everyone in the group might be familiar / feel strongly for the issue assigned, our hypothesis was that sometimes this puts them in the best position to bring a fresh perspective that could be missing. Furthermore, many of the issues were interconnected so we imagined that participants would still be able to contribute in some way.

However, the reality was that it was difficult for people unfamiliar with the issue to comment on the key insights, existing solutions and gaps to create a deeper understanding of the issue for the Listening Living Labs collective as a whole.

What we could have done was to form multi-sector groups, allow them to choose an issue for their discussion but as far as possible, ensure that each issue is chosen. If the group chooses an issue they are not familiar with, participants can still bring their fresh eyes and participate in the discussion; and they can still share their expertise in the issue(s) they are familiar with during the "Gallery Tour" segment to help add to the knowledge of the Listening Living Labs collective (see below).

Group	Issue	Stakeholder Group	Profile Description	Name
1 High Recruitment Debt	Lived Experience	Non-Profit/Voluntary	Asia Philanthropy Circle	Cindy Huiqia
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	DHE, eCommerce	Sam Leong
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	Here With You Helpline	Odela Wong
		CMSC	Rubel Rufl	
		Employment Agency	David Benadon	
	Government	MOM (ACE)	Victor Ng	
2 High Recruitment Debt	Lived Experience	Non-Profit/Voluntary	McKinsey Pro-bono group	Tag Yuje
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	A Good Space, SPARK	Ashokan Ramakrishnan
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	Academic + Psychological first aid	Dr. Vani Khare
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	PROJ enlivn + Student	Nurani Kaseh Binte Isa
		Migrant Worker	Tasrif Ahmed	
	Business	Employer (RAMKY)	Junid Bin Kasslin	
3 Struggles with Living and Working Conditions	Lived Experience	Non-Profit/Voluntary	Law Society Pro Bono Services	Kimberly Pah
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	Here With You Helpline + Academic	Andrew Lee
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	A Good Space	Anthia Ong
		Migrant Brother	Ruponi's plus one?	
		Domestic Helper	Sonia Serenade	
	Business	Ex Dorm Operator	Tony Bin	
4 Struggles with Living and Working Conditions	Lived Experience	Government	MOM	Azrina Binte Abdul Azim
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	CMSC	Nicholas Chan
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	SG Climate Rally	Kanksha Chaufa
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	The Majority Trust	Charles Tan
		Migrant Workers Singapore	Ripon Chowdhury	
	Business	Employer (RAMKY)	Junid's wife/plus one	
	Business	TS Group	Charanjeet Singh	
5 Struggles with Living & Working Conditions	Lived Experience	Non-Profit/Voluntary	SG Climate Rally	Gohul Jayaram
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	Sama Sang	Kari Tamara Chua
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	IMMENVISIBLE	Jovanna Huang
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	HealthServe	Abin Choo
		WIMBY	WIMBY	Imam
	Business	Association of Employment Agencies		Jayaprema
6 Barriers of Access to Healthcare	Lived Experience	Government	Project Dawn (Doctor)	Jared Ng
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	The Ubuntu Space + A Good Space	Toh Kian Beng
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	TWC2	Rebecca Ng
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	24 Asia	Mohammed Nazmul Hogue Khan
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	HealthServe	Michael Cheah
	Business	CMSC	Nil Hasan	Mark Ng
7 Social Exclusion of Migrant Voices	Lived Experience	Government	MOM	Enunce Chin
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	Academic	Walter Edgar THE SERA
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	WIMBY	Nicole Ooi
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	MaidForMore	Phoebe Sienn Yap Xiu Wen
		Migrant Helper	EBing Navato	
	Business	Centurion (Westlite Dorm)	Terence Lee	
8 Caregiver Burden	Lived Experience	Government	MOM	Gaby Leong
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	Here With You Helpline	Jevon Ng
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	PSSCOM	Chin Meng Leng
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	HR Manager for DSV (Global Transport and Logistics)	Sharmain Chin
		Non-Profit/Voluntary	HOME + SG Climate Rally	Suradeep Kumar
	Business	Aduha	Jocelyn Mather	
	Business	SG Assist	Gred Tan	

Screenshot of the multi-sector groupings we used for Workshop 1



Promote exchange of ideas across multi-sector groups

The large group sharing might not have been the best format to promote exchange of ideas across groups as we noticed participants feeling more drained and dis-engaged as each group took turns to share key insights from their discussions. Although, we got a rich exchange and appreciation of the complexity of migrant worker issues when an employer responded to a migrant worker who shared about the quality of food he received. The employer shared his desire for better food but the budget constraints he was struggling with in sustaining his business so that his workers could continue to be employed.

How could we have better designed the workshop for more of such interactions to emerge? Perhaps what we could have done is to:

- **Use colour-coded cards** - for participants to give quick responses as they are listening to other groups share. For example, a red card could mean: "I disagree with this point", a green card could mean: "I agree with this point" and an orange card could mean: "I absolutely have to respond to this". Based on these responses, the main facilitator could get a quick pulse check on the sentiments in the room and pick out specific people to share their thoughts. This might have kept participants more engaged throughout the large group sharing.
- **Scrap the large-group sharing and use a "Gallery Tour" format instead** - each group nominates one representative to stay at their table to explain the key insights that arose from their group's discussion. Participants can walk around the room freely to visit tables to see what other groups have come up with, respond to the insights generated and share their perspectives.

Show, not tell

We could have better demonstrated to participants why collective action (beyond creating more programs in our organisations) has value for addressing migrant worker issues. While we mentioned this in our opening speech by sharing about efforts by NVPC's Migrant Worker CoLabs during the pandemic, it would have been more powerful if we started the workshop with experiential activities that help participants experience the following, before jumping into talking about the issues. This would have been a very meaningful way to set the context and build the will for collective action from the start:

- Foster relationships between participants - which will directly impact the quality of discussions. Perhaps some games which enable people to reveal interesting tidbits about themselves or discover common interests with others in the room would have been helpful, beyond what we did at the start of Workshop 1. If we had the time, perhaps even a walk in the forest, a meal gathering or going on a learning journey together - experiences that are more authentic, creative and open would have helped.
- Help participants realize the value of taking a step back to dive deeper into appreciating the complexity of migrant worker issues before rushing to solutions. Perhaps we could get participants to stand in a line and rate from 1 - 10 how they think Singapore is doing in creating a welcoming environment for migrant workers to work and live in. Afterwards, we can ask people to talk about the differences in their scores.
- Help participants experience the need to work together and how it can lead to new possibilities which might not be available if we acted alone. Perhaps one way could be to map all the existing solutions up on a wall and pose a question: if we have all these services / programs, why do some of the issues faced by migrant workers still exist? We could again ask participants to stand in a line and rate from 1 - 10 the level of partnerships for migrant workers in Singapore and invite them to talk about the differences in their scores (and perhaps even articulate some of the obstacles that prevent partnerships from forming).



Things to Consider When Sending Invites

1

Do we invite citizens / members of the public who might not have prior knowledge of the issues?

We opened Workshop 1 to anyone who wanted to attend but perhaps citizens and members of the public are better positioned to participate in ideation (in Workshop 2) than a discussion into what the issues are - because such a discussion would require some subject matter expertise that only a professional working in this space, or a citizen who has been deeply involved in migrant worker issues as a changemaker will have.

But then again, citizens will have a fresh pair of eyes that could spark new ways of seeing the issues. One way to manage this is to screen participants before they register to ensure they have some background or at least interest in migrant worker issues. Or to ensure that each group has a mix of citizens and professionals.

2

Get perspectives from people at different vantage points of the system

Another thing to consider is to go beyond inviting people from different stakeholder groups to also invite people with perspectives of different levels of the system, where meaningful. For example in the Non-Profit stakeholder group, it would be useful to invite a case worker with experience supporting migrant workers in salary claims, medical bills, etc and the Executive Director or leader of that organisation who can share a more strategic view of migrant worker issues, the various important actors and interventions in the ecosystem, etc.

3

What if the person we invite cannot come and wishes to send someone in their organisation on their behalf?

Ideally we want the invited person to come because they have certain values or expertise that will be useful for the collective but realistically, we had different people representing one organisation coming for different workshops.

LRT Meeting 2:

4 May 2022

25 ideas were generated by the multi-sector groups across the 5 issues. Between Workshop 1 and 2, the Secretariat Team did a preliminary prioritisation of these ideas based on two dimensions: (i) how much resources we think are needed to implement it and (ii) the estimated impact of the idea, enabling us to create this 2 x 2 matrix:



Screenshot of the Secretariat Team's preliminary prioritisation of the 25 ideas that emerged in Workshop 1. Each colour represents one of the five issue areas for the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs (e.g. Yellow is an idea for struggles with living and working conditions)

Following that, we organised another meeting with the LRT to present these ideas and the key insights uncovered from the multi-sector group discussions in Workshop 1. We then asked each LRT member to take the next few days to complete a Google Form which asked to rate each idea for impact and resource load and give any comments they may have (see screenshot below).

Idea #20: Allow domestic workers to view their potential employer's past experiences, similar to how employers can request to see their domestic worker's history.

Description (optional)

On a scale of 1 to 7, rate how impactful Idea #20 may be. *

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Low Impact

High Impact

On a scale of 1 to 7, rate the amount of resources Idea #20 would require to be brought to life. *

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

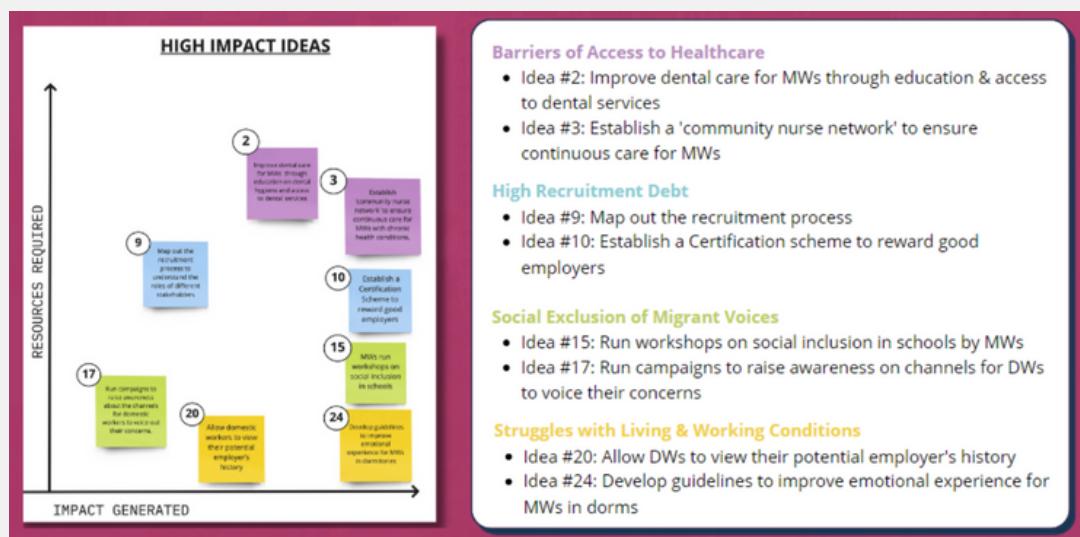
Low Resource Load

High Resource Load

Do you have any comments about Idea #20?

Long answer text

Screenshot of the Google Form that asked LRT members to give their rating and comments for each of the 25 ideas generated in Workshop 1



Screenshot of the 8 prioritised ideas after the LRT's input

After all LRT members had completed the Google Form, we prioritised the ideas based on their ratings and comments, eventually landing on 8 ideas as shown above. These were to become the ideas that we would put forth in Workshop 2, for participants to form work-groups around.

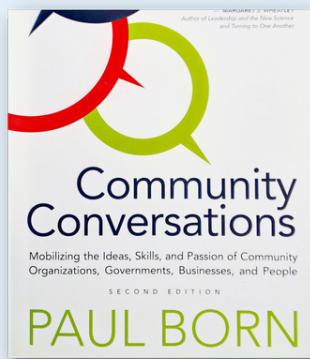
Resources



Data Walk | The Urban Institute

Tool

A **Data Walk** is an interactive way to share data and research with diverse stakeholders and engage them to add their perspectives to create a shared visualization of key insights relating to the issue(s).



Community Conversations | Paul Born

Book

Community Conversations is a book by Paul Born, former Co-Founder and Co-CEO of Tamarack Institute that covers the building blocks of community conversations and ten techniques you can use to host transformative community conversations, from Conversation Cafes to Future Search.



Dilemma Circle | Tamarack Institute

Tool

The **Dilemma Circle** is a tool to help diverse stakeholders identify and visualize each other's perspectives towards an issue and co-design a question they are energized to address.



Click on either the image or the underlined words to access the respective resources!



Brave Spaces in Public Dialogue |

Mohamed Imran Mohamed Taib
Article

As articulated by Mohamed Imran Mohamed Taib - a safe space is often adopted when discussing contentious issues such as racism, LGBTQ+ rights, gender inequality, religious violence, and many more. In many instances, they are effective but can also reinforce the dominant culture of avoiding conflict.

In [this article](#), Imran argues that if we fear conflict, we may miss out on the potential for change that can be better. Instead, we need to have both a safe and brave space. In a brave space, we embrace risk - that our deeply held convictions may be wrong and we might have to change our perspectives. We challenge ourselves by allowing opposing views to enter our space and be ready to transform or be transformed.



Community Reference System | Tamarack Institute Tool

Developed by Fred and Merrelyn Emery, the [Community Reference System](#) is a highly participative way to engage a community in helping to select who attends a learning event or gathering on their behalf. It's a process to allow a community to determine the participation of its own members and is an effective way to build awareness and "buzz" about your Gathering.



Click on either the image or the underlined words to access the respective resources!

“

Most managers will rather live with a problem they cannot solve, than try a solution that they cannot understand

Sylvia Cheuy
Consulting Director, Collective Impact
Tamarack Institute

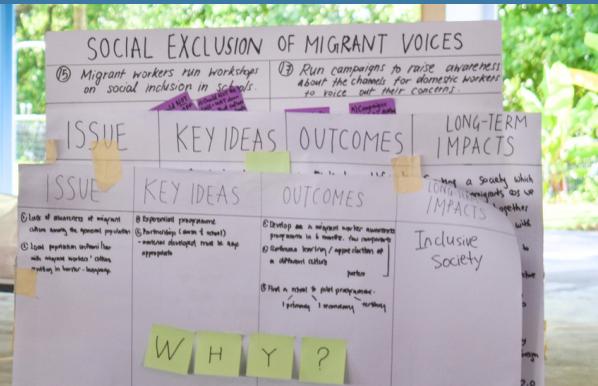


Workshop 2

Ideation



**29 May 2022
1.00pm - 5.00pm
Penjuru Recreation Centre**



In Workshop 2, multi-sector participants gathered to form work-groups around 8 ideas that had been prioritised by the LRT members. This prioritisation was crucial in enabling us to focus the energy of the collective on ideas that could be piloted in 6 months, so we can move from talking to action, before people lose interest. The ideas were:

No.	Key Issue	Ideas
1	Struggles with Living and Working Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidelines to improve emotional experience for migrant workers in dormitories Allow domestic workers to view their potential employer's history
2	Barriers with Access to Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve dental care for MWs through education on dental hygiene and access to dental services Establish community nurse network to ensure continuous care for MWs with chronic health conditions

No.	Key Issue	Ideas
3	Social Exclusion of Migrant Voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MWs run workshops on social inclusion in schools • Run campaigns to raise awareness about the channels for domestic workers to voice out their concerns
4	High Recruitment Debt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a certification scheme to reward good employers • Map out the recruitment process to understand the roles of different stakeholders
5	Caregiving Burden	No ideas in this category were prioritised by the leaders of the LRT

In designing for the workshop, we wanted to achieve the following objectives:

- Get participants to refine ideas generated from Workshop 1 that were prioritised by the LRT and form work-groups around ideas that resonated with them
- Identify people or stakeholders they need to talk to in between Workshop 2 and Workshop 3 to further refine the ideas

Key Design Elements

In designing the workshop, we included the following key components:



Connection Activity: Human Bingo

To help participants get a quick sense of who was in the room, we invited them to play a game of Human Bingo. Each person was given a Bingo card (e.g. "find someone who represents the Academic stakeholder group" or "find someone who lives in the same part of Singapore as you"). This would help with the formation of multi-sector work-groups later.



Presentation of Key Ideas prioritised by the LRT

We gave a short presentation of the 25 ideas generated in Workshop 1 and how the LRT had prioritised and narrowed them down to 8 ideas. We explained that we are prioritising ideas to give the collective some focus areas to work on, otherwise we can be stuck in talking and continuing to generate new ideas but never make progress.

We can revisit the other ideas later on but we need to get started somewhere to get some quick wins for the collective to feel energised.



Gallery Walk: Look at Insights that Emerged

We wrote each of the 8 prioritised ideas on A3 boards and invited participants to walk around the space in silence, write comments on the ideas and take time to think about the issue area and idea they would be most interested to work with to create a prototype in 6 months?



Formation of Multi-Sector Work-Groups

We used a three phase approach to form work-groups.

- **Visualize stakeholder groups** - First, we split the space into different areas, with each area representing one stakeholder in the migrant worker space (e.g. lived experience), and asked participants to move to the stakeholder group they most identified with. This provided a visual indication of the diversity in the room, which would facilitate team formation later on.
- **Indicate interest for ideas** - we repeated the ideas that were prioritised and invited participants to consider again: "which issue area and idea would I be most interested to work with to create a prototype in 6 months?" Then, we invited participants to move to the board representing the idea they are interested in.
- **Quick reflection** - we invited participants to share with others who chose the same idea why they were interested. At any time, they could switch to other ideas if they preferred to. This gave space for participants to interact with their potential team members while also verbalising their motivations, so they could make a more informed decision.

When forming the work-groups, we encouraged participants to try to have representatives from different stakeholder groups in their team as far as possible - as these multi-sector insights will be very helpful in developing the ideas further. The Co-Chairs Anthea and Michael also tried to help make adjustments where needed. We tried to have at least 3 in a group but not more than 8.



Creation of Team Values

Once the teams were formed, we invited each team member to introduce themselves and share why they were interested in the issue. They were then asked to nominate a team leader, who would facilitate their team to:

- Discuss what is one thing they need to practice as a team for people to feel safe to speak and share their perspectives?
- Share one thing they can do / make / have experience in that they can contribute to the team
- Create a team name and team cheer - to foster a sense of team identity



Round Robin

We invited each team member to first reflect on the following questions in silence:

- What is one way this idea can be improved?
- What is one important thing the group must consider when working on this idea?

After a few minutes, we asked the team leader to facilitate a discussion for everyone to share their reflections.



Team Discussion: Create a Simplified Theory of Change

We invited each team to flesh out the idea they chose in more detail by answering the following questions, adapted from the Theory of Change.

- What is the problem we are trying to address and why is it important?
- What is the end goal we wish to see for this issue?
- What are 2 – 3 main things that must change in order to achieve this end goal?
- What is something we can create in 6 months that will help move towards this end goal?



Team Discussion: Next Steps in Between Workshop 2 and Workshop 3

We gave each team some time to discuss what are some next steps they can take in between Workshop 2 and Workshop 3. We also asked each team to create a Whatsapp group and add members of the Secretariat Team to it, so we could follow up with them easily when needed.



Large Group Shareback

Each team took 4 minutes to share key highlights from their Theory of Change with other participants. Before they shared, we asked them to share their team name and perform their team cheer.

Note-Taker's Pad: Team Values

Team Name:

What is 1 thing we must practise as a team for us to feel safe to speak and share our perspectives?

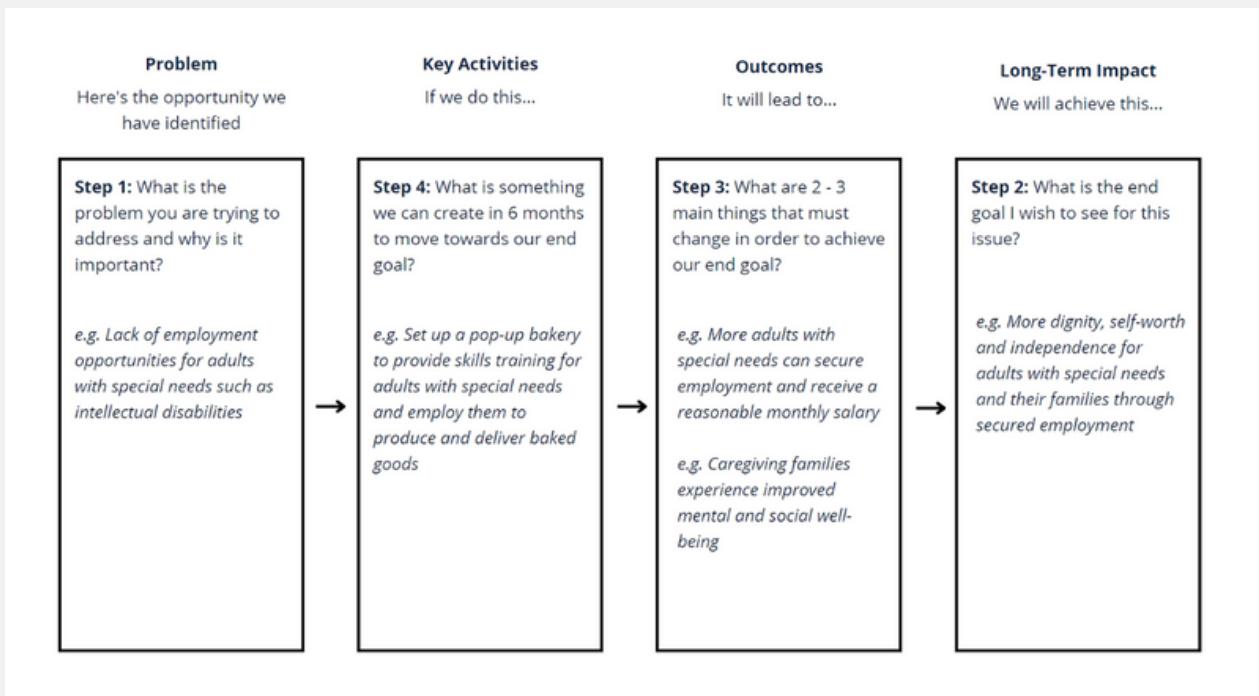
Team Members:

What is 1 thing each member can do, make or have experience in that they can contribute to the team?

Team Leader:

Issue/Idea:

Screenshot of the template we gave to each team to create their team values



Screenshot of the template we gave to each team for them to create a simplified Theory of Change for their idea

Key Reflections

Improving Our Design

As mentioned in our reflections for Workshop 1, we could have focused Workshop 1 on identifying gaps in perspectives and mapping existing solutions and used Workshop 2 for brainstorming ideas. While the 8 ideas prioritised by the LRT were good starting points, we felt like something was missing. Looking back, we could have improved our design of Workshop 2 in the following ways, to enable teams to better refine the ideas:

1

We could provide two supplementary materials to the work-groups: (i) a summary of existing solutions and (ii) a summary of key insights for the issue

Knowing the 8 prioritised ideas, we could have asked the LRT members or done desktop research using websites like the [Solutions Journalism Network](#) to understand if local or overseas solutions similar to the ideas have been tried before? And if yes, were they effective? Why or why not? Then, we can summarise this evaluation of existing solutions into a document which could be sent to participants beforehand or distributed to them right after they have chosen their work-groups.

We could also have provided a revised version of the Research Summary document we shared with participants of Workshop 1, which contained key insights for the five issues along with the respective challenge statements (see above). Some participants who came for Workshop 2 had not participated in Workshop 1 and therefore, did not have much contextual understanding of the issues and prioritised ideas to meaningfully refine them. Even though we tried to give them a short recap on how we arrived at the prioritised ideas, these two documents would have given them a better foundation of knowledge from which to refine the ideas.

2

After work-groups were formed, we could have asked them to take stock of their knowledge gaps instead of refining their idea right away

Instead of asking teams to discuss general questions such as "what is one way this idea can be improved" and jumping straight into creating a simplified Theory of Change, we could have asked them to discuss the supplementary materials above and then map out, using the following guiding questions: (i) what do we know about the problem / idea? (ii) what do we not know? (iii) what do we need to do to find out?

For example, one of the teams chose the idea of allowing domestic workers to view their employer's hiring history. By going through this process, they could have generated these insights:

- **What do I know about the problem?** (e.g. current policies forbidding frequent change employers from employing another domestic worker, insight that domestic workers are unable to access the hiring history of their potential employer but their employer can do so for them, etc)
- **What do I not know?** (e.g. What are key factors that lead to a successful match between a domestic worker and employer? What is the employment agent's role in this and do they have incentives to want to champion this? How comfortable would employers be for their domestic worker to view their hiring history? Have there been similar ideas tried and what was their effectiveness)
- **What do I need to do to find out?** (e.g. Speak to an employment agent, conduct a survey of employers to find out their open-ness, speak to someone from MOM to understand current policies, etc)

This would have created some immediately actionable items for the team to find out in between Workshop 2 and 3. Having clarity on what to do next and making a plan to delegate these tasks could have led to more follow-through from team members. While creating a simplified Theory of Change is great, we observed that translating it to immediately actionable tasks is very important for team members to feel empowered to do something; otherwise it stays as an intellectual exercise.

Because there were also participants who did not come for Workshop 1, this would have helped them get up to speed quickly so that they can meaningfully contribute.

3 **After taking stock of their knowledge gaps, we could have asked them to put the idea through a SCAMPER process**

We could have used the **SCAMPER** process as a guiding prompt to help them refine the idea they have chosen. Going through the seven elements within SCAMPER - Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to Another Use, Eliminate and Rearrange might have sparked new ideas for the teams, enabling them to better refine their ideas.

We could have asked them to articulate their needs and what they hope to get

We could have used the [**Gives and Gets**](#) tool to ask each team member to articulate what they can contribute, what they hope to get from their involvement with this idea and what are the limitations to their involvement. They could answer from both their personal capacity and organisational capacity too. This is crucial to surface what each team member's interests are and ideally, the idea can be shaped in a way that aligns with their interests. This will increase the chances of them dedicating time to work on the idea, especially given we weren't able to give significant financial incentives like funding to actualize their ideas.

Other Reflections

Creation of a team cheer and name was very important

We asked each work-group to create a team name and cheer, and to perform it when they shared the key insights from their discussions towards the end of the Workshop. This element of play helped to create the beginnings of a team identity, which was helpful later on in giving team members the motivation to follow through.

The work-group formation went surprisingly smoothly

We were pleasantly surprised that participants self-organised into multi-sector stakeholder work-groups quite smoothly. We had dedicated a significant amount of time for this segment anticipating that it wouldn't be easy for participants to choose and converge. It reminded us that there is wisdom in community and sometimes, perhaps all we need to do is to set up the container and wait to see what unfolds.

What mechanisms can we put in place to ensure that work-groups actually follow through with their ideas?

Because we lacked resources, we weren't able to give significant financial incentives such as funding to the work-groups. There were some work-groups who were very enthusiastic about their ideas at the workshop but went silent immediately after Workshop 2 ended.

Suggestion: participants who want to continue on the Listening Living Labs process place a deposit with AGS after workshop 1 (e.g. \$50). This is refunded to them after their attendance in Workshop 4. Those who don't finish attending all workshops will have their deposit forfeited, and this will go into a pool that will be used to fund the projects pitched in Workshop 4.

There were possibly too many ideas (8) and therefore work-groups. Perhaps we could have narrowed down the number of ideas to just the best ones, which would result in larger groups (but not too large) i.e. with the most support.

If we had used Workshop 2 for brainstorming, here's how we could have designed it to facilitate the generation of good ideas:

Prime participants before they come for the workshop - in the days leading up to the workshop, we could have sent participants some emails to 'warm them up for brainstorming'. For example, these could be: (i) an article with simple exercises to boost one's creativity like James Altucher's [How to be an Idea Machine](#), (ii) inspiration of ideas that have been tried overseas for migrant workers, taken from websites like [Solutions Journalism Network](#) or (iii) pre-read of our key insights and challenge statements.

Instead of focusing on problems, focus on aspirations - there is a difference between a problem solving mindset and a possibility-driven mindset. When asking participants to generate ideas for problems, we observed that it becomes easier to get stuck in current challenges. This creates an emotional energy which could be one of anger, frustration and blame, and the space for innovation is not large. Interestingly, when we shift to a space of possibility by asking questions like:

- When it comes to including migrant and domestic workers in Singapore, what is the future state I wish to see?
- If this future state is a 10 on a 1 - 10 scale, where do you think we are now?
- What are some obstacles in our way to reaching this future state?
- What are some things we can do to get closer to this future state?

Perhaps it could have liberated participants to come up with more creative and innovative ideas to get closer to this future state. A tool like [Critical Shifts](#) can be used.



LRT Meeting 3:

14 June 2022

In Workshop 2, 7 work-groups were formed to work on the following ideas. Between Workshop 2 and 3, we presented the ideas by these work-groups to the LRT members and asked the LRT members to give their feedback on:

- One piece of advice they'd like to share with the work-group
- One way they can help with the resources required for this idea
- One idea they are most interested to provide guidance on

We consolidated this information and shared them with the work-groups ahead of Workshop 3.

No.	Key Issue	Team Name	Idea
1	Struggles with Living and Working Conditions	Marigold	Develop guidelines to improve the emotional experience of migrant workers in dormitories
2		History Buffs	Allow domestic workers to view their potential employer's hiring history
3	Barriers with Access to Healthcare	Toblerone Teeth	Either improve access to dental care for migrant workers or establish a community nurse network for migrant workers with chronic health conditions
4	Social Exclusion of Migrant Voices	Cool Changemakers	Enable migrant workers to run workshops in schools to promote social inclusion
5		Melting Pot	Similar idea to Team Cool Changemakers, they also want to enable migrant workers to run workshops in schools to promote social inclusion

No.	Theme	Team Name	Idea
6	High Recruitment Debt	No Alibaba	Map out the entire recruitment process to understand the roles of different stakeholders and where it is possible to intervene to reduce high recruitment debt for migrant workers
7		Good Company	Pilot a certification scheme to reward good employers and encourage ethical hiring

Public List of Projects

			
👉 Improving Access to Dental Care for Migrant Workers Stage 2: Gather Resources/Draft Plan Barriers of Access to Healthcare Improving access to education on dental hygiene Migrant Worker Lived Experience Research Summary Toblerone Teeth	👉 Establishing Community Nurse Network for Migrant Workers with Chronic Health Conditions Stage 2: Gather Resources/Draft Plan Barriers of Access to Healthcare Improving continuity of care for migrant workers Migrant Worker Lived Experience Research Summary Toblerone Teeth	👉 Migrant Workers Run Workshops in Schools About Social Inclusion Stage 2: Gather Resources/Draft Plan Social Inclusion of Migrant Voices Migrant workers run workshops in schools about social inclusion Migrant Worker Lived Experience Research Summary Cool Changemakers	👉 Migrant Workers Run Workshops in Schools About Social Inclusion Stage 2: Gather Resources/Draft Plan Social Inclusion of Migrant Voices Migrant workers run workshops in schools about social inclusion Migrant Worker Lived Experience Research Summary Melting Pot
			
👉 Mapping Out Entire Recruitment Process to Reduce High Recruitment Debt for Migrant Workers	👉 Establishing a Certification Scheme To Reward Good Employers of Migrant Workers	👉 Developing Guidelines to Improve the Emotional Experience of Migrant Workers in Dormitories	👉 Allowing Domestic Workers to View their Potential Employers' History Stage 2: Gather Resources/Draft Plan

Screenshot of the 7 work-groups that were formed, and the ideas they are exploring. There are 8 ideas here but 7 work-groups because Team Toblerone Teeth was exploring two ideas.

Resources



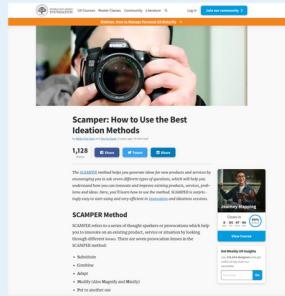
Critical Shifts | Co-Creative Tool

A **Critical Shift** is a statement that seeks to describe the change we want to see. Participants are asked to first map out the current state of the issue, an ideal future state and the shifts that need to happen to achieve this future state. Sometimes, ideas are categorized and prioritised using dimensions such as: (i) within our sphere of influence, (ii) within our control and (iii) outside of our control, to help a group identify where they can best make change.



Gives and Gets | Tamarack Institute Tool

Newly formed groups jump right into creating a vision for their team's work or defining shared tasks but taking time for each team member to explore and articulate their personal needs and potential benefits received through the **Gives and Gets** tool can be a constructive way to ensure that the interests of each member is integrated into the team's plan, increasing the chances of follow-through, especially in teams that are made up of people from different organisations.



SCAMPER | Interaction Design Foundation Article

The **SCAMPER** method helps you generate ideas for new products and services by encouraging you to ask seven different types of questions, which will help you understand how you can innovate and improve existing products, services, processes and more.



Click on either the image or the underlined words to access the respective resources!

“

We didn't take "no" as an answer. We took "no" as a question.

Dr Mechai Viravaidya
Founder and Chair
Population and Community Development Association (Thailand)



Workshop 3

Internal Feedback

3 July 2022
1.00pm - 5.00pm
Kranji Recreation Centre



In between Workshop 2 and Workshop 3, Team Marigold dropped out, so we had 6 work-groups remaining in Workshop 3. We asked each of them to pitch their ideas to the collective, serving as a rehearsal for Workshop 4, where they will be convincing funders and members of the public to support their prototypes.

Aside from the work-groups, we also intentionally invited relevant resource persons in the migrant worker space who had certain insights, resources or networks to help these work-groups improve their ideas, rather than them having to go out and find resource persons on their own. In designing for the workshop, we wanted to achieve the following objectives:

- Get work-groups to provide a status update of their progress since Workshop 2 so they can feel more energised by the process the collective is making as a whole
- Invite work-groups to give a pitch to articulate the prototype they want to build and receive feedback from each other

Key Design Elements

In designing the workshop, we included the following key components:



Connection Activity: Improv Introduction

We invited everyone to stand in a circle and when it was their turn, each person would say their name and strike a unique pose that best describes them.



Pitching by Teams

Each team had 10 minutes to give a pitch of their idea and 8 minutes to hear feedback from the audience. We randomly selected 4 people representing different stakeholders to be on a multi-sector panel to give feedback for each team's idea, changing the set of 4 people each time there was a new team pitching their idea.

This helped to keep the audience members engaged throughout the pitching segment. Audience members who were not selected to be on the multi-sector panel could also give feedback via post-its that were pasted on boards allocated to each team.

When preparing for their pitch, we asked each team to answer these questions:

- Start with their team cheer
- Give a brief description of their idea
- At the end of 6 months, what does a successful prototype look like for you?
- What are the key milestones you foresee in the next 6 months?
- What are the exact resources we need for this prototype to succeed?
- What are some risks you see and how will you mitigate them?

The prompts given to the multi-sector panel (and the audience members writing their feedback on post-its) were: in one breath (30 seconds), share your feedback on:

- What is one thing you liked?
- What is one suggestion you'd like to make to help the team move forward?



Team Discussion on Feedback

After the pitches were complete, we broke into small groups to give each team some time to reflect on the feedback they received, either through comments from the multi-sector panel or post-it notes from the audience. The reflection prompts we gave them were:

- What is one thing we want to celebrate today?
- What is one thing that stuck out for me in the feedback?
- What is one thing we need to do to successfully launch our idea in Workshop 4?



Gratitude & Appreciation Circle

To complete the workshop, we asked participants to stand in a circle, facing each other and silently reflect on either: (i) one person in the collective they are grateful for or (ii) one thing they are hopeful for. This led to some heartwarming sharings of appreciation for each other and their dreams for the future. After an intellectually rigorous few hours of pitching, this was a relaxing and beautiful way to end.

Key Reflections

1

Incentives help to reduce barriers to action by work-groups

This is a recurring reflection. Because we weren't able to gather funders to fund the work-groups significantly to prototype their ideas and many work-groups were citizen-led, it was challenging for them to work on the ideas without a strong incentive, given various competing life and work priorities.

Although there were work-groups containing professionals who work in the migrant worker space (e.g. social workers) and could theoretically be good leaders for the work-group, they found it difficult to align their organisation's work with the work-groups for various reasons (e.g. need approval from higher management, KPIs in their work not aligned with KPIs of work-groups, etc).

In between Workshop 2 and 3, the homework for the work-groups was to talk to people who could give them deeper insights into their ideas. For example, a work-group working on the idea of enabling migrant workers to run workshops in schools could speak to a teacher in the Character and Citizenship Education department of a school to understand the feasibility of their idea.

However, many work-groups found it difficult to do this because of their limited time and other priorities. The Secretariat Team had to help arrange for meetings with these resource persons. Many work-groups also found it difficult to find common times to meet after Workshop 2 and the Secretariat Team had to assist with scheduling to keep the work-groups going.

In the absence of incentives, conversations such as the Gives and Gets conversation mentioned above become very crucial in keeping work-groups members motivated to take action. Perhaps we should also limit homework for participants in between the workshops and give them time to do whatever they need to do during the workshop itself, such as bringing the resource persons to them rather than them going out to find on their own.



2

The multi-sector panel that gives feedback for each pitch was a good idea

With 6 work-groups sharing their ideas and each work-group taking up to 18 minutes (10 minutes for their pitch and 8 minutes to receive feedback from the audience), this process could have felt very draining but it turned out to be energising and exciting instead.

One key reason for this is the multi-sector panel. First, because we had randomly assigned 4 people to represent different stakeholders to give feedback for each work-group's idea and changed the set of 4 people whenever there was a new work-group pitching, this helped keep people engaged and attentive.

Almost everyone got a chance to be on this multi-sector panel and even those who were not selected had a chance to share their feedback by pasting post-its on the boards allocated to each work-group. It was a great way to harness the collective wisdom of the audience.



The small group is the unit of transformation

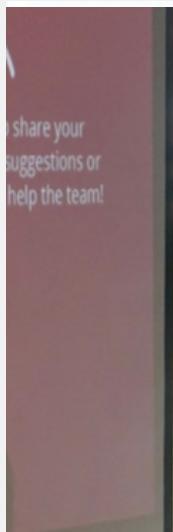
Peter Block

Community: The Structure of Belonging

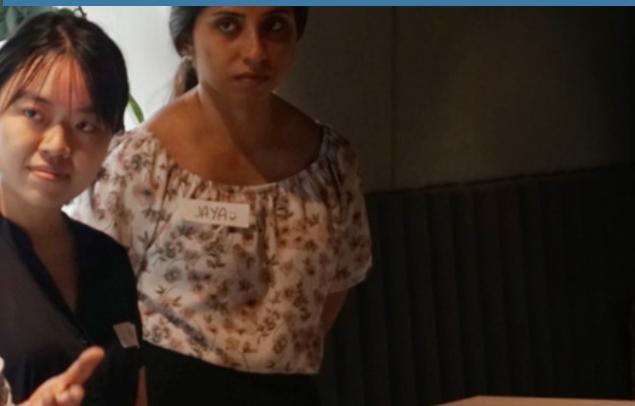


Workshop 4

A Good Pitch



Sunday, 9 October 2022
1.00pm - 5.00pm
Workcentral



At the end of Workshop 3, Team Cool Changemakers and Team Melting Pot decided to merge to form Team Cool Pot, because they were working on similar ideas. Team Toblerone Teeth and Team No Alibaba dropped out. As previously mentioned, Team Marigold had also dropped out just before Workshop 3, hence we had 3 work-groups going into Workshop 4. Before Workshop 4, we asked each team to write a two-pager for their project, which could serve as preparation for their pitch as well.

We hoped to use this two-pager to invite specific funders who might be interested to fund their ideas or non-profit organisations that could be partners in implementing their ideas.

In designing this workshop, we wanted to achieve the following objectives:

- Affirm and celebrate the efforts of the three work-groups, in creating their ideas to make Singapore a more welcoming place for migrant workers to work and live in
- Get work-groups to pitch their ideas and receive feedback, resources and networks from curated audience members to help them with implementing these ideas
- Give invited audience members an opportunity to contribute their ideas and feedback towards social change

Key Design Elements

In designing the workshop, we included the following key components:



Connection Activity: Human Bingo

To start the workshop in a high energy way, we invited participants to play a game of Human Bingo again, to quickly get a sense of who was in the room. Just like in Workshop 2, each person was given a Bingo card (e.g. "find someone who represents the Academic stakeholder group" or "find someone who lives in the same part of Singapore as you").

We introduced each work-group leader and invited them to share a quick response to the question: "what is one memorable moment from your journey so far?" As a token of appreciation for their efforts, we presented each team leader with a \$100 food voucher which they could use for meals at their team meetings.



Postcard Writing

We invited each participant to write a letter to their future selves, with the prompt: "Imagine it is April 2023 (6 months later), what have you contributed in making Singapore a more welcoming place for migrant workers?"

We mailed them their letters in April 2023 and hoped it was a pleasant surprise and reminder of their ability to always do what they can, from where they are, with what they have.



Pitching by Work-Groups

Each team had 10 minutes to pitch their idea, followed by 10 minutes to receive questions from the audience. Audience members were encouraged to contribute comments and suggestions to help the team, via a QR code, while the team was giving their pitch.



Breakout Group Discussion

After the pitches, we broke out into three groups (one per team), to enable audience members to give more in-depth feedback to each of the groups. For example, for Team Cool Pot, several Secondary School teachers gave advice to the team to conduct their workshops outside of the school time, to make it easier for Secondary Schools and teachers to work with them.

Participants were invited to complete a Digital Contribution Form (see screenshot below) to indicate how they wish to participate in the collective (e.g. joining a work-group, sharing useful contacts, etc), as the collective moves into the prototyping phase in Phase 3.

💡 After hearing the ideas from the 3 work-groups, which work-group(s) are you interested to support? *

Please select all that you are interested in!

- History Buffs - enable domestic workers to view the employment history of their potential employer to im...
- Cool Pot - Create an experiential workshop for Pri and Sec school students to relate to migrant workers t...
- Interim Good Company - Help migrant workers write CVs to improve job matching of migrant workers wit...
- I do not wish to support any of the work-groups at this time

📝 If you selected a work-group(s) in the previous question, what are some ways you may be able to contribute specifically?

Please choose any that resonate with you

- I'd like to be involved as a group member to implement the prototype
- I can share some knowledge on the issue that the work-group is tackling
- I know people who can help the work-group and can help to connect
- I can support the work-group by making a donation
- I can offer my skills (e.g. website dev, storytelling, language translation) to support the teams
- Other...

💡 Please elaborate on your answer above

(e.g. I know a few migrant workers who have incurred big debts to come here and can connect the work-groups to hear their experience.) Please share with us so we can consolidate the contributions to be shared with the work-groups!

Long answer text

Screenshot of the Digital Contribution Form

Key Reflections

1

We could have added a judging element

Beyond having audience members ask questions, perhaps we could also get a panel of funders to give each team a score, with the highest scoring team receiving some funds from the funders. This might have raised the stakes of the pitch and made it more exciting.

2

For greater clarity, it might have been good to list out the resources that work-groups needed, and state whether AGS could or could not provide them

This could be money, publicity, legitimacy, connections, manpower, space, logistics, etc. Therefore, if the Backbone cannot secure significant funding for the prototypes, as it was in our case, they can still provide some other resources that can be useful for the work-groups. Perhaps work-groups could also receive these non-monetary resources as rewards for progress reports during Phase 3.

3

We could have used a feasibility matrix

We could have invited audience members listening to the presentations to use a [feasibility matrix](#) to evaluate different ideas. It might be powerful to have all audience members do it together in real time and to discuss the results later on in the breakout groups.



“

Farmers don't grow crops. They create the conditions for crops to grow.

Gareth Morgan
Founder
The Morgan Foundation



Overall Reflections

Reflections on Our Process

1

Set clear expectations on what participation entails so that people don't come and go in between the workshops

Although we informed participants and asked them to acknowledge this as part of registering for Workshop 1 and 2, we still had participants who didn't know that the Listening Living Labs was a multi-workshop process or that the objectives were to form work-groups for action.

Learning from the Citizen Panels organised by several government agencies, it would have been better if we first organised an information session to (i) share the key dates of the workshops, (ii) emphasise the commitment that was required of the participants, which was to follow through with all 4 workshops and (iii) explain why their commitment was important.

After this session, we can invite people who are interested to apply to join the Listening Living Labs. Although there may still be attrition, this could have ensured that everyone coming on board was aware of the expectations of their participation, leading to smoother follow-through of the work-groups.

The overall design should have followed the following types of conversations:

- What are the issues?
- What are existing solutions for these issues?
- What are gaps that aren't addressed?
- What are possible solutions developed from other communities?
- What ideas do we have?
- What can we each contribute and/or who else might we engage?

Workshop 1 should have been split into two parts: (i) understanding key issues faced by migrant workers and current solutions and (ii) commenting on whether there are any gaps or white spaces and refining challenge statements. This will set up a good foundation from which meaningful ideas can be generated in Workshop 2, reducing the likelihood of ideas that already exist or have proven to not work. After Workshop 1, those who want to continue with the Listening Living Labs process must commit to attending all remaining workshops. Only those who came for Workshop 1 can continue on to the next workshop.



Workshop 2 should be about brainstorming ideas in response to the refined challenge statements or identified white spaces from Workshop 1. When asking participants to generate ideas, we can focus on articulating aspirations rather than fixing problems. This creates an emotional energy of possibility that is conducive for innovation. The person who generates the idea would become the team leader and they would need to define what skills, resources and roles are needed in order for their idea to be executed. Therefore, beyond ideation, some time should be allocated for team leaders to take stock of this.

Workshop 3 should be a rehearsal for Workshop 4. It doesn't have to be a full workshop, but a day when each team comes for a pre-arranged time slot to practice their pitch, and the LRT members (or specific resource persons identified) can give feedback on how their pitch can be improved.

Workshop 4 should be a pitch to obtain a \$1,000 grant to execute their ideas and produce a prototype, which can validate whether the idea is feasible. The pitches should be judged by a panel of judges and if possible, every pitch should receive something as it's not meant to be a competition, but a collective working together for a common cause.

2

For work-groups to continue, incentives and interests have to be aligned well

In hindsight, we didn't do this too well. Most work-groups were formed by ordinary citizens who were volunteers. Therefore, there were always going to be competing life priorities and in the absence of incentives such as funding, it became difficult to sustain the momentum. Hence we had several participants who dropped out.

We also faced obstacles inviting professionals working in the migrant worker space because many were either too busy with their day-to-day operations or did not see enough value to participate in the Listening Living Labs process to uncover new ideas. More work could have been done on our end to learn about their key performance indicators (KPIs) and figure out if the work-groups could align to these.

3

What if we convened the collective only when we had defined ideas?

Instead of asking participants to generate ideas in Workshop 1, what if we had done the research, worked with the LRT to generate and prioritise ideas, and enrolled people into the collective to work on these specific ideas?

Would it have helped us with enrolling people to join the collective because there are concrete ideas to look at? Or would it have been more difficult to engage people around ideas they had no stake in generating?

This was the model that the [**Growth Collective**](#) adopted, gathering a group of 8 organisations to work on a defined idea - to train and deploy mental wellness peer supporters into the community.

4

Find ways to engage participants regularly outside of the workshops

Other Collective Impact initiatives offer learning events to their networks to harness people's love for learning to deepen relationships and build community in between workshops. We used to send ad-hoc emails such as news articles relevant to migrant workers or announcements for upcoming workshops but perhaps this could have taken the form of a regular newsletter.

5

Digital tools helped us to stay in touch with all the people we had interacted with through the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs

In total, 90 people participated in the Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs, whether as a workshop participant, LRT member, IAC member, etc. Beyond them, we also consulted many people with knowledge of migrant worker issues, who served as valuable resource persons.

We used digital tools like Notion to keep track of their contact details and notes from the last conversation we had with them. This was very helpful for us to nurture warm relationships and build the goodwill necessary for people to continue contributing to the collective. We also used tools like Mailerlite to send ad-hoc email updates to participants in between workshops, so they would continue to be excited and come forward for future workshops.

Communicating the Value of the Listening Living Labs

1

How could we have demonstrated the social impact created by the Listening Living Labs?

We struggled to articulate the social impact of the Listening Living Labs process to funders, who expressed interest in funding the prototypes of the work-groups but not the process that helped create the ideas for these prototypes. Another funding obstacle we ran into was funders saying they preferred to fund projects that worked directly with beneficiaries and therefore, they couldn't support 'intermediaries' like A Good Space.

Beyond collecting qualitative stories of how people were impacted by the Listening Living Labs, we could also have communicated the number of citizens who had never volunteered with / were exposed to migrant worker issues prior to the Listening Living Labs, who came forward to participate.

Another way we could have communicated our impact is to add the volunteer hours that were contributed by citizens who participated in the workshops and work-groups in the Listening Living Labs and what the total dollar value would be if we paid them for their participation.

For example, if the average median hourly wage in Singapore was \$31.60 per hour and in total, participants who came contributed almost 900 hours, that is a value of \$28,440 generated by their participation.

We also need to find research reports and literature which talk about the social impact that intermediaries can create, so that we can share them with funders to advocate for the importance of such intermediaries.

2

Could citizens play the role of a 'prototyping force' for professional agencies?

We learnt that some non-profit organisations in the migrant worker space are too bogged down by daily operations to prototype new solutions to the issues they see on a daily basis. Could the value of the Listening Living Labs be to mobilise citizens to implement such prototypes? If the prototypes are successful, they could be enfolded into the organisation, who could then feel more confident to invest resources and manpower to take the prototypes further.

Philosophical Reflections

1

Be comfortable with surrendering control

Ultimately, we had to be comfortable that we could not really control whether any work-groups formed or if they were successful. All we could do was to create the conditions to increase the chances of this happening, whether it was designing meaningful workshops or inviting the right people.

We struggled to communicate to funders that the process of understanding the issue from various perspectives, identifying new solutions and mobilising the energy of many people to want to address the issue is just as important as the final outcomes. This affected our ability to raise funds for the Listening Living Labs process, as they preferred to fund the projects that came out of it but not the process itself.

2

Culturally, are we ready for uncertainty and exploration?

Taking a collective approach to address a complex issue seems deeply uncomfortable and counter-cultural because we typically are valued as problem-solvers in Singapore. It can take time and a lot of patience to wade through the mess of integrating different perspectives of an issue, identifying white spaces and aligning interests to take action together.

But when it comes to complex issues, our traditional ways of responding may be inadequate. We need to recognise the value of new ways of seeing and acting. We need to recognise the value of coming together, even if the possibilities that can emerge may not be immediately apparent. It can be all too easy to slip into doing what's immediate and easy to execute.



Resources



Social Power - How Civil Society can 'Play Big' and Truly Create Change | Sheila McKechnie Foundation Report

Social Power is a report about what civil society could achieve if it were working to its full potential: how it could contribute to positive social change if it were working optimally and without constraint.



Community Power: The Evidence | New Local Report

Community Power: The Evidence is a research paper that features examples from across the UK and internationally about the impact of community initiatives and how they can chart a new direction for the wider system of public services - one that is community-led rather than institution-led.

In particular, they examine the "evidence paradox" - that community initiatives are required to demonstrate their worth using market-based metrics that are not set up to recognise their ethos-based value.



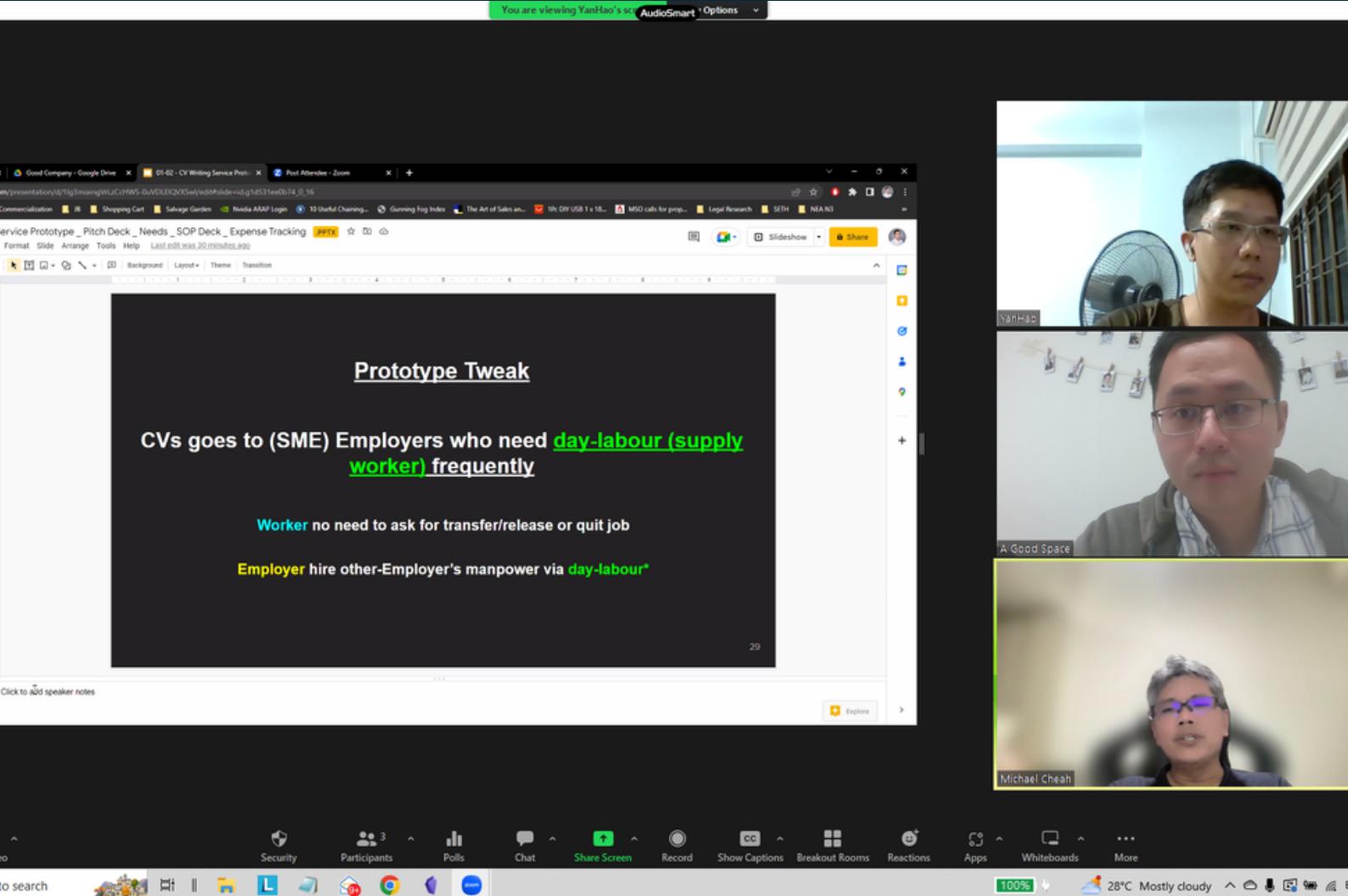
Click on either the image or the underlined words to access the respective resources!



We discover the path by walking it together.

Alanna Irving
Co-Founder
Enspiral Co-operative (New Zealand)





PHASE 3: PROTOTYPE

- Proposed Process for Phase 3
- Progress of Work-Groups in Phase 3
- Reflections for Phase 3
- Resources
- Closing Reflections

Proposed Process for Phase 3

At the time of writing this guide, we are almost at the end of Phase 3, just before the Finale. This section documents the process we took. In Phase 3, work-groups developed and implemented a prototype of their ideas, within 6 months, to evaluate their feasibility. If the prototype is successful, the Secretariat Team will create summaries of the lessons learnt from the prototypes and organise a Finale event to gather implementation partners to discuss working together to proliferate the prototype to reach a wider audience.

In total, 3 work-groups progressed to Phase 3, with the following ideas and prototypes:



Team History Buffs

Idea: Enable domestic workers to view the hiring history of their employer

Proposed 6-month Prototype: Speak with 3 employment agencies and conduct a survey of 500 employers to understand their open-ness towards enabling domestic workers to view the hiring history of potential employers, to develop a recommendation to the Ministry of Manpower.



Team Cool Pot

Idea: Create experiential workshops for younger children to learn about migrant workers in Singapore

Proposed 6-month Prototype: Develop a pilot workshop to get students to produce digital content that helps cultivate empathy towards migrant worker issues, eventually leading to a national integration competition through digital stories.



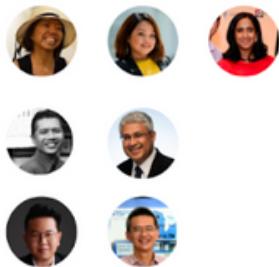
Team Good Company

Idea: Help migrant workers in Singapore to write CVs to find jobs

Proposed 6-month Prototype: Help up to 6 migrant workers in Singapore to write their CVs to test if it can help improve job matching to employers and reduce agent fees they pay.

Phase 1: Scope

Formed Leaders' Roundtable to identify key issues faced by migrant workers, gaps in existing solutions and craft challenge statements



Phase 2: Listen & Ideate

Gathered multi-sector stakeholders to discuss findings, brainstorm ideas around challenge statements and form 3 work-groups



Phase 3: Prototype

Work-groups pilot their ideas for 6 months (e.g. write CVs for migrant brothers and pass it onto an employment agent who can help worker to find a job)



Phase 4: Proliferate

If pilot is successful, rope in other agencies like HOME to develop a joint-plan to scale this to more migrant workers



* Adapted from the Collective Impact Process, a disciplined form of multi-sector collaboration proven to be an effective framework for high-impact change to address complex issues such as poverty in North America and Canada.

Screenshot of our Listening Living Labs process and how Phase 3 fits into the overall flow

After Workshop 4 ended in October 2022, the work-groups began their prototyping phase in November 2022, ending in May 2023. We designed the following key milestones:

Milestone	When?	Purpose
Closed Door Dialogue with Stakeholders + Mid-Point Check-In	February 2023 (about 3 months into prototyping phase)	Invite work-groups to share their progress and challenges with key stakeholders, who can help share advice or resources to help the groups get unstuck and further improve their prototypes. This will also serve as a checkpoint for work-groups to stay accountable towards implementing their prototypes.
Draft Concept Notes for Each Work-Group	In Between	<p>The Secretariat Team can sit with leaders of each work-group to distil the lessons they are learning as they implement their prototype and draft a concept note which can be shared with potential funders and implementing partners to get them excited and invite them to the Finale.</p> <p>The concept note should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the work-group's idea to address the issue

Milestone	When?	Purpose
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe key insights into the issue that the work-group has learnt from implementing the prototypes or from conversations with multi-sector stakeholders that they didn't know before • Describe challenges they faced during the prototype and lessons learnt (where applicable) • Photos and outcome of the prototype (where applicable) • Outline an estimated budget required by the work-group to scale / develop the prototype further and key milestones ahead • Outline the roles needed to proliferate / develop the prototype further, including identifying specific implementing partners and funders who might be interested
Finale	June 2023	<p>Work-groups can present the progress of their prototypes and the lessons learnt from their prototypes to garner support from people who can commit resources, manpower and their networks to proliferate / develop the prototypes further. This can be also be a celebration and affirmation of the efforts of the work-groups.</p> <p>Perhaps inviting a Political Office Holder to present tokens of appreciation and listen in to the presentations would be good.</p> <p>It might be a good idea to also have a panel discussion inviting multi-sector stakeholders to reflect on how to form more partnerships in the identified area (e.g. migrant workers for this Listening Living Labs).</p>

Milestone	When?	Purpose
		<p>For work-groups that do not wish to continue beyond their prototype, the Secretariat Team should ensure they have a good end and their efforts are captured in a detailed concept note, so that someone else who is interested could take over, ensuring some continuity.</p> <p>After Phase 3, work-groups may have registered as an organisation to carry out their idea. Different work-groups may meet from time to time to keep up with each other's progress.</p> <p>The prototype should ideally be owned by both the work-group members and the Backbone, so the Backbone can still find other people to continue the work-group's project if its original members choose not to continue.</p>

Typically in a Collective Impact Process, the end of Phase 3 will also see the creation of a Common Agenda, a shared work plan of sorts that energises the work-groups and members of the collective to sustain their engagement with each other over a few years. Ultimately, we weren't able to do this (for reasons shared below).

Progress of Work-Groups in Phase 3

This is a brief description of the progress the work-groups made during Phase 3, along with a summary of the key points they learnt and the outcomes of their prototypes. A more detailed description can be found in the Appendix.



(Clockwise from top left): Team History Buffs meeting with Ierfan, an employment agent (second from left), meeting with Ms K. Jayaprema (first from left), photos from a team discussion and meeting with Sam, an employment agent (second from right).

Team History Buffs

Bhing Navato • Kimberly Pah • Jaya Anil Kumar • Sam Syahrul • Sonia Serrenade

Team History Buffs spoke to several employment agents, domestic workers, non-profit organisations and representatives from MOM during their 6-month prototyping journey, hoping to learn more about current policies to facilitate better matching. One highlight was speaking to Ms K. Jayaprema, President of the Association of Employment Agencies Singapore, who offered some valuable insights into how to pitch the idea of enabling domestic workers to view the hiring history of their potential employer and the current hiring process.

In particular, the team came away with the following insights that helped to shape their prototype:

- Employment agents will not voluntarily take the lead in this change because it may hurt their business. It must be either MOM that mandates this or a societal shift where employers are willing to have their hiring history revealed.
- The ideal beneficiary of such a recommendation could be domestic workers coming to Singapore for the first time.
- Increasing visibility of hiring history is not a silver bullet, and is just one of many pieces of information that can help improve matching and protection of first time domestic workers.
- The way to pitch the recommendation is to show how it could lead to better matching - which is beneficial for employers, employment agents and domestic workers themselves - rather than as one of fairness or human rights.

Eventually, the team conducted a survey of 268 employers and 49 employment agencies to understand if they would be open to such a policy recommendation and to hear their concerns. Their next steps are to engage MOM's policy team in a further conversation to discuss the findings.



(Clockwise from top left): Youths enjoying themselves at the experiential workshop, a migrant brother showing a self-portrait he made, youths enjoying a meal with migrant workers as part of the workshop and screening of videos produced at the award ceremony

Team Cool Pot

Chua Ningpei • Ashokan Ramakrishnan • Gokul Jeyaram

After speaking to teachers from Secondary Schools, Polytechnics and other changemakers in the migrant worker space, Team Cool Pot came away with the following insights that helped to shape their prototype:

- Real change can be made if they reach out to 'unconverted' youths who have little prior interaction with migrant workers, rather than the ones who are already aware or volunteering in this space.
- These 'unconverted' youths can be attracted by pitching the experiential workshop as an opportunity to learn skills (e.g. digital storytelling) and build their portfolio rather than an event to gain awareness of migrant worker issues.

- Running workshops in Secondary Schools or even Polytechnics would require a long lead-time and a lot of discussions because curriculum time is hard to find. Instead, position the experiential workshop as part of a national integration competition, and host it outside of school, where schools can nominate their students to attend.
- Involve migrant workers as equal participants in the workshops and have them produce digital stories and enter them into the competition as well.

Eventually, Team Cool Pot developed a pilot experiential workshop that saw 6 migrant workers interact with 21 youths, eventually producing 10 digital stories to counter negative stereotypes of migrant workers in Singapore. The post-workshop survey showed a significant increase in positive attitudes towards migrant workers in the 21 youths.

One of the student teams had originally created their video just like it was a school project. However, after consulting with Ningpei and Ashokan (members of Team Cool Pot), they received feedback that the video lacked an emotional connection.

The students then had a meeting where they each shared their personal stories growing up with a helper. Tears of gratitude flowed during that meeting, as students discovered their individual emotional connection to who domestic workers that had raised them. This led to them producing a video titled 'Tita', a moving account that expresses gratitude to their domestic workers.



Screenshot from the video [Tita](#)



(Clockwise from top left): Yan Hao and Raja writing CVs for workers in a transition shelter operated by the Migrant Workers' Centre, writing a CV for a worker in a Recreation Centre, talking to workers to understand if a CV would be useful and writing CVs for workers in an SME.

Team Good Company

Tan Yan Hao • Raja

After a winding path that involved speaking to migrant workers, employers and weekend trips to far-flung Recreation Centres and Dormitories to write CVs for different workers, Team Good Company came away with these insights that helped to shape their prototype:

- Migrant workers whose companies have run into some trouble (e.g. gone bankrupt) and are currently living in a transition shelter with an urgent need to find a job to stay in Singapore are the specific group of workers that will benefit from having CVs, not work permit holders in stable employment and not day labourers who are hired and paid on an ultra-short term, day-to-day basis.
- Employment agencies are the specific audience that could benefit from receiving CVs, not employers. Especially the ones that are assisting shelter workers to find jobs to stay in Singapore.
- Teaching shelter workers how to create their own CVs offers two quantitative advantages: it saves time for employment agencies who are helping them to look for jobs and eliminates the need for shelter workers to pay for CV writing services.

Eventually, Team Good Company wrote CVs for 6 migrant workers, including 4 for shelter workers that were handed to an employment agent who was assisting them with securing a job that would enable them to remain in Singapore.



Role of the Secretariat Team in Phase 3

The key role of the Secretariat Team in Phase 3 is to set the work-groups up for success and help them to launch well. This includes:

1

Make sure that work-groups are robust and can survive a change in personnel

For work-groups with few members, the Secretariat Team should help the work-group leader with finding new members and identifying other members who could share the leadership responsibility.

Where possible, the Secretariat Team should be present at the first work-group meeting, so that the group knows there is support from a wider network to help them figure out how to implement the prototype. If the work-group leader is the only one doing the work, the team quickly becomes very vulnerable to this leader burning out.

2

Create milestones for work-groups to be accountable to

The Secretariat Team can create milestones as listed in the section above to keep the work-groups focused and moving.

3

Help to facilitate work-group meetings if needed

The Secretariat Team could help provide suggestions on how to facilitate meetings if the work-group leader is new to leading teams. Where necessary, they could also step in to help facilitate certain processes - e.g. aligning interests with the [**Gives and Gets**](#) tool, conflict resolution amongst members, sharing best practices from overseas, etc.

4

Be the go-to person if they are struggling with something

If the work-groups need help with advice, resources or networks, the Secretariat Team can help, perhaps even going beyond to do some tasks for them, such as writing a press release or outlining the budget.

5

Document learning from prototypes and draft concept notes

The Secretariat Team should interview work-group leaders to identify what they have learnt about the issue and their proposed solution, when trying to implement their prototypes. This will help to build a better understanding of the issue. The Secretariat Team should also draft concept notes, which can be used to gather other implementing partners to scale the prototype.

6

Keep track of ideas that work-groups did not work on

There were other ideas such as improving access to dental care for migrant workers that we couldn't find people to work on. The Secretariat Team should keep track of these ideas and perhaps produce concept notes for them, so that the collective can revisit them at a later date.



Role of the Leaders Roundtable in Phase 3

In Phase 3, the main role of the leaders in the LRT is to pay attention to how the prototypes are going and identify any obstacles or helpful resources for the work-groups. Specifically, we think the role of the LRT can be:

1

Give feedback to help refine the concept notes

The LRT can draw from their strategic expertise to identify specific implementing partners and funders who might be interested and invite them to the Finale.

2

Search out resources, dollars and commitments from sector leaders

The LRT can be champions of the prototypes, sharing the concept notes for each of the work-groups with people in their networks who have resources / funding, in order to excite them about the results and invite them to come help scale the prototypes.

3

Help work-groups think about how to communicate their impact

The LRT can draw from their years of leadership and experience communicating with different stakeholders, to advise the work-groups on how best to communicate their impact to funders and other potential implementing partners - both qualitatively and quantitatively.

4

Act as coaches, critics and mentors

The LRT will have an overview of the different prototypes that are happening concurrently and be able to identify what else they need to flourish. They need to be able to ask questions that help the work-groups to identify blind spots they may have missed, in order to make progress.

Reflections for Phase 3

Challenges with creating a Common Agenda because we couldn't convene a sustained collective



What is a Common Agenda?

In the Collective Impact Process, the goal is to get leaders in the LRT to draft a Common Agenda, a document which outlines:

- The collective's 5-year vision for migrant workers in Singapore
- The lessons learnt from the prototypes
- The list of work-groups that will take action towards this vision
- The shared KPIs they will use to measure success
- The governance structure that ensures the collective makes progress
- The budget needed
- The roles that each member in the collective will play

The Common Agenda serves as a common vision for members of the collective and the wider ecosystem to rally around and work together on. Ultimately, we were not able to get to this point because the reasons for people coming back to act collectively were not strong. This was probably because of a few reasons:

1

We needed more convening power to bring key leaders into the collective

Being new to the migrant worker space, we tried to involve key leaders such as the directors of non-profit organisations, government agencies or ground-up movements with some success but we could definitely have done more.

Also, many attended individual workshops to share their perspectives but we weren't able to get them to sustain their participation across multiple workshops. Although we were grateful to the US Embassy for providing us with a grant that helped us sustain our secretariat work in Phase 3 and provide some funding to the three work-groups, we did not have significant financial incentives to draw people to come forward to be part of work-groups.

Therefore, trying to secure some funding commitments from a foundation or government agency for the work-groups that emerge from the Listening Living Labs before you begin can be very useful.

We struggled to create shared ownership of the issue and demonstrate why a collective approach was needed

This could be due to two reasons: Firstly, we did not have enough time to form deeper relationships and establish the 'why' for collective action. In our prior experience with building communities, people collaborate with people they like and trust, and this takes time to build.

We could have designed more workshops for people to explore migrant worker issues in more depth, uncover white spaces for collaboration and discuss how their key performance indicators (KPIs) in their individual projects or organisations might align to a common vision, while building relationships along the way. However, this was difficult to do as we did not have sufficient financial resources and manpower to host multiple workshops.

Secondly, we had initially communicated to the LRT that they would be involved as a Steering Committee that would meet once a month to give advice to the Secretariat Team. With hindsight, we now see that we communicated more clearly, and should have told the LRT that we needed them to help with implementing the prototypes and drafting of the Common Agenda, beyond giving advice.

Eventually, because LRT members were all busy and perhaps because we failed to build shared ownership of the issue and solutions, we were not able to find a common time to meet during Phase 3, let alone draft the Common Agenda.

The combination of these two factors meant that the Secretariat Team, Anthea and Michael (as Co-Chairs of the LRT) bore most of the responsibility in driving the collective forward, instead of it being a collective effort where the responsibility is shared with the rest of the LRT and participants.



Other Reflections

1

In the absence of funding, incentives or convening power, high touch relationships can help keep the work-groups going

Because the three work-groups were made up of ordinary citizens, there were some moments when they felt burnt-out trying to juggle their life and work priorities with working on the project. Several work-group members felt discouraged at certain points in their project, when they received feedback that their idea did not work and they had to pivot to try something new, but they did not know what to try yet.

At these critical points, the Secretariat Team befriended the members who needed emotional support, whether it was buying groceries for a work-group member who was burnt-out or taking them out for a meal and listening to them share their challenges. Sometimes during these conversations, we would discuss if there is an easier way for them to continue contributing and try to fit that into what the work-group needs.

Over time, the Secretariat Team managed to bring some members back from the brink of quitting, by letting them know that we cared for them, and would journey alongside them to complete the project. Most of these informal check-ins happened on the weekends outside of the working hours of the Secretariat Team. While it proved to be effective, is this sort of high-touch relationship building sustainable?

2

How might the work that intermediaries do, in convening various stakeholders, be made more financially sustainable?

The Backbone needs to set up a structure where they are adequately compensated for the facilitation, project management and secretariat support it provides. We were thankful that the US Embassy funded part of the costs of the Secretariat Team in Phase 3, which enabled us to do the work mentioned above to support the prototypes.

However, an important question, which we ultimately weren't able to find an answer for, was: how might work that intermediaries do in convening various stakeholders be made more financially sustainable? Especially for Phase 0, 1 and 2, it was difficult for us to garner the required support and funds.

Through conversations with Tamarack Institute, which has many more years of experience in Collective Impact work than us, we learnt how they positioned themselves as a [**Field Catalyst**](#).

In going to funders / the government, they communicate the value they bring as:

- Understanding the issue(s) on a 'macro' level and proposing a "whole community" engagement strategy to mobilise different actors in the system and community for action, in ways that funders / the government cannot.

- Strengthen capacity of projects by drawing lessons and facilitating resource sharing across projects.
- Making the work of projects more visible and robust - in particular, measuring change and doing storytelling to convince people that change is possible.
- Bringing ground insights generated from the projects to system leaders to give them some insight into what to do.

They generate revenue through: providing coaching, running workshops and hosting learning events, attracting funding from Foundations to do research in key areas and charging membership fees which give people access to learning networks - it currently leads 4 poverty-specific national learning networks.

3

Good citizen-led projects cannot happen without any supporting infrastructure

At times when some of the work-groups were in a precarious state (e.g. team leader at risk of dropping out or majority of team members being too busy to move the project forward), we stepped in as the Secretariat Team to help them with implementation to keep the work going.

For example, there were times where the members of Team History Buffs were all very busy and the Secretariat Team needed to do a large part of the work to create a first draft of the survey for employers and employment agencies and coordinate meetings with multi-sector stakeholders.

It is quite likely that without the Secretariat Team providing this support and significantly driving the project to tide through the members' busy period, they might have left things as they were and dropped out of Phase 3.

The reality we discovered is that citizens have good ideas but sometimes, they may be limited in time or skills to bring these ideas to life, especially when there are so many competing priorities. Therefore, the Secretariat role becomes really important in ensuring that ideas actually get translated into action.

4

Important to have a conversation on who owns the project after the prototype

Especially if there are members from different organisations in a work-group, it would be helpful to have a conversation on how each organisation's contribution is represented and how decisions are made in the work-group. For example, it could be as simple as having the logos of each organisation credited in the team's presentation slides, or even a simple agreement that intellectual property developed by the work-group jointly belongs to the different organisations. These are conversations that the Secretariat Team can help to facilitate.

Resources



How Field Catalysts Accelerate Collective Impact |

Sylvia Cheuy, Mark Cabaj & Liz Weaver

Article

How Field Catalysts Accelerate Collective Impact is an article by Tamarack Institute that examines how a unique form of intermediary organisation known as a field catalyst is needed to generate and scale solutions that ultimately lead to systems change.



Funding Field Catalysts: From Origins to Revolutionizing the World | The Bridgespan Group Report

This paper by The Bridgespan Group is the first of a series of new research pieces on the topic of Field Catalysts - what they are, what impact they have created and why they are important.



Social Sector Intermediaries: What Are They and What Do They Need? | Social Ventures Australia Report

This report, funded by the Paul Ramsay Foundation, outlines the funding journeys and key success factors behind eight field-building intermediaries and identifies the funding approaches needed for deep and sustainable change.



Click on either the image or the underlined words to access the respective resources!

Closing Reflections

In closing, I'd like to offer three additional reflections:

1

What qualifies as action?

If we were to take a traditional approach to measuring our efforts, perhaps funders / impact evaluators would say that we have come up short because the Listening Living Labs process took almost 1.5 years and only generated 3 projects. "How can I justify funding your manpower costs over 1.5 years to come up with only 3 projects?" is something we have heard along the way.

While some actionable outputs are important, perhaps we also need to consider action in a broader way. For example: would (i) the strengthening of relationships between multi-sector stakeholders and citizens through the workshops, (ii) building of empathy towards migrant worker issues and (iii) the activation of previously-unengaged citizens to come forward to contribute, be valuable outputs as well?

As a nation, Singapore is very skilled at problem solving but the nature of problems we will face as a country in the years ahead will become more complex. Because no one organisation or sector can solve complex issues alone, we need to create new ways that gather multi-sector stakeholders and citizens to listen, think and solve them together.

Could the value of the Listening Living Labs in building these muscles for collaboration, innovation and experimentation be just as important as coming up with action plans, budgets and timelines?

2

Is there value for a ground-up led attempt at convening?

Or should this work be done by the government and professionals like non-profit organisations? Many times along this journey, it felt like jumping off a platform and growing wings on the way down - we simply didn't know what we didn't know.

As a smaller outfit without a history in the migrant worker space prior to the pandemic, we struggled to find funding and credibility that would have helped us with convening stakeholders as easily as other initiatives that were led by the government or government-linked agencies. We also lacked experience with facilitating such a collective process and had to work within limited resources to figure it out.

“Is it worth devoting our limited resources to such work, especially when a large part of the process was not funded and we faced many challenges? Why not leave it to the government or agencies to do this?” was a question that I asked myself many times, as did several of the members in our co-operative.

Speaking to Tamarack Institute and other conveners in Singapore, we learnt that each type of convener had different strengths and challenges, whether they were led by the government, non-profit organisations or ground-up efforts.

For example, funders might be good conveners because they have funds to offer to work-groups and prior networks with stakeholders in the migrant worker space. However, they may face challenges in creating a safe space for participants to share. People may defer to funders or not be honest about their views on migrant worker issues and existing solutions because they don’t want their organisation to look bad.

Government-led initiatives might have conversations that move more slowly and be more cautious with their ideas. However, after ideas have been formed, they may end up moving faster than other conveners because they may be able to obtain resources more quickly.

Even though we were not subject matter experts, perhaps we valued-added with (i) our skills in process facilitation, which allowed innovative ideas to emerge, (ii) the relationships we have built over the years to bring citizen changemakers to the table, and (iii) our ‘neutrality’ as an organisation with no prior experience / agenda in the migrant worker space.

3 How can such intermediary work be supported?

We are grateful to the US Embassy for supporting part of the process in Phase 3 but we struggled to find funding for a large part of the intermediary work we did, with most funders still trying to understand what exactly is the work that intermediaries do and how they could justify funding this work. Most were more comfortable funding the work-groups that were formed because they had concrete prototypes, but were less comfortable funding the intermediary work that A Good Space did, in convening multi-sector stakeholders.

My hope is that in articulating the processes and work that goes into convening a collective and sharing resources about the work of Field Catalysts through this guide, we can start more conversations on how to better support intermediaries in the future.

Hopefully, other community organisers can build on the lessons we have learnt through the Listening Living Labs and when the timing is right, deploy it to the various complex issues that Singapore will face in the coming years; and be supported by funders to make it happen.

Should citizens be involved in addressing complex issues or should it be left to 'the professionals'?

As we refresh our social compact through the Forward SG movement, perhaps this is also an opportunity to reimagine the role of citizens. Beyond being consumers of public services, could citizens be proactive leaders who can create change, alongside the efforts of the government and non-profit organisations?

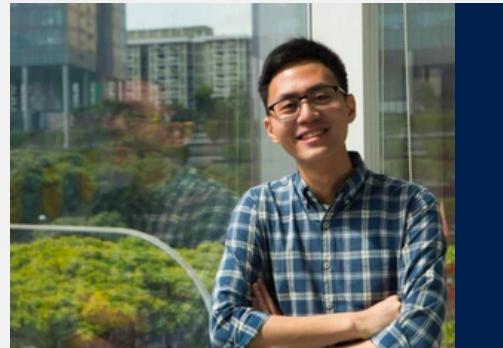
These muscles were already built during the COVID-19 pandemic, when we saw an incredible number of ground-up initiatives emerging to meet needs on the ground, wherever formal institutions and agencies were overwhelmed.

And I believe we have to keep building them, given the complex challenges that lie ahead for Singapore. As Gerard Ee of Beyond Social Services once said: "We must regard social issues not simply as problems to be fixed, but also as opportunities to rally society towards a common good."

Each gathering of citizens becomes a chance to strengthen our social fabric, increase our resilience as a society and create new possibilities for Singapore, our home.

Vincent Ng

General Manager & Founding Member
A Good Space Co-operative Limited



SOCIAL EXCLUSION OF MIGRANT VOICES

⑯ Migrant workers run workshops on social inclusion in schools.

1. MOE support & endorsement

- * All MOE help one community to have a migrant

Social integration "Awareness" workshop -

- plan for...
- follow-up internal so that connection
- involve students working with them (co-creating)
- artistic agency or story telling to present real issues to students (music, poetry, art)

A) Should NOT be ONE-OFF workshop - plan for... so that connection

- ONE-WAY down load. But rather involve students working with them (co-creating)
- artistic agency or story telling to present real issues to students (music, poetry, art)

Field trip to dormitories to...

Consideration
① Pay MB for their time

Train MW to for self-plans and actions

INCLUSION
* Involve migrant voice sharing

* Be part of school curriculum CCA-MO

We don't censor migrant voice

2. Must have different versions/solutions own age groups.

⑰ Run campaigns to raise awareness about the channels for domestic workers to voice out their concerns.

What are the resources?

The need to keep focus & resources (local)

A) Campaigns should be aimed at locals so that these channels are embraced.

B) Campaigns should not just be seen as voicing "problem" But should be how problems are solved.

Leverage Facebook, WA

We need to ensure the campaign reaches DWs

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & APPENDIX

- Acknowledgements
- Consolidated Insights: Team History Buffs
- Consolidated Insights: Team Cool Pot
- Consolidated Insights: Team Good Company
- Research Reports Read
- Consolidated Links to Resources

Acknowledgements

The Migrant Workers Listening Living Labs was brought to life by the efforts of many active citizens - whether it was those who lent their perspectives by participating in the workshops, resource persons who shared their expertise and connections, or people who stepped forth to turn discussion into action by joining a work-group. Here is a special mention for them:



LEADERS ROUNDTABLE

Anthea Ong
Michael Cheah
Charles Tan
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Charanjeet Singh
Zakir Hossain
Tony Bin
Dinesh Dhillon
K Jayaprema

STAFF TEAM & INTERNS

Vincent Ng
Vandhana Jeyaram
Sarah Tan
Sin Melia
Amanda Tay
Nurulhuda Hassan
Melodie Yip
Vaishnavi Kannan
Adriale Pang
Ervin Ong

INITIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Anthea Ong
Michael Cheah
Kelvin Low
Jared Ng
Zakir Hossain
Ripon Chowdhury
Walter Theseira
Charan S Bal
Ethan Guo
Sim Gim Guan
Mark Ng
Brian Lim

WORK-GROUPS

Bhing Navato
Kimberly Pah
Jaya Anil Kumar
Sam Syahrul
Sonia Serrenade
Tan Yan Hao
Thye Yoke Pean
Ashokan Ramakrishnan
Chua Ningpei
Gokul Jeyaram
Junid Kasslin
Ayden Ramakrishnan
Chin Meng Leng
Nuraini Isa

Acknowledgements

PARTICIPANTS

Alvin Choo
Alvin Tan
Amali Ibrahim
Andrew Lee
Andrew Copuyoc
Ashley Toh
Ayden Ramakrishnan
Azrina Azim
Calvin Tee
Caroline Lim
Cindy Hsiao
Cynthia Ng
David Bensadon
Eli Nurfadilah

PARTICIPANTS

Ellen Lavilla
Gio Park
Chong Gua Khee
Chong Hui Xian
Ierfan Ibrahim
Jeryl Sim
Kok Jo Ee
Jolovan Wham
Joshua Lum
Juliana Beh
Junid Kasslin
Kanksha Chawla
Kenneth Lee
Toh Kian Beng
Lauren Chong
Lora Jane Arugay
Nair Manish
Melvin Quek
Michael Goh
Michiko Kinoshita
Mike Tan
Mindy Neo

PARTICIPANTS

Mynul Islam
Nazmul Khan
Nicholas Chan
Nill Hasan
Odelia Wong
Goh Qian Hui
Rahul Shah
Renu R
Rebul Rafio
Sam Leong
Sean Quinn
Sharmain Chin
Simon Lim
Stephen Quinn
Sunny Park
Tasrif Ahmed
Thulani Keyura
Vani Khare
Victor Ng
Ng Ying Zi
Neo Yu Shan
Tag Yujie

SUPPORTERS

Alison Bassi
Angie Chang
Chan Whee Peng
Chew Yuan Xiang
Darrell Ong
Devona Daryl
Dhipan
Dilys Tan
Elaine Loo
Ethel Kok
Eunice Chin
Farhana
Francis
Gloria Arlini

SUPPORTERS

Hsu Che Wei
Ian Yip
Jacker Wong
Joseph Lua
Kari Tamura
Khoo Ming En
Lenard Pattiselanno
Liew Yi Ling
Lim Choon Choon
Marceline Chin
Martin Tan
Melissa Kwee
Michele Wooi
Ng Soek Mun

SUPPORTERS

Paul Born
Seah Jie Ming
Serene Tan
Sharleen Siow
Stacey Choe
Sylvia Cheuy
Tan Shu Xiang
Tang Weng Chau
Tung Yui Fai
Yvonne Lim

Consolidated Insights: Team History Buffs

to share your
suggestions or
help the team!



1

Employment Agencies (EAs) can currently access the hiring history of employers through an online Ministry of Manpower (MOM) database. However, they require the employer to provide their NRIC number and date of birth, before they can access this information. And this usually happens after the domestic worker has been confirmed to be matched with the employer

By entering these details into the MOM database, an EA can view the employer's hiring history, which includes details such as:

- Duration of employment (e.g. Jan 2011 - Feb 2012)
- Nationality of the domestic worker
- Age of the domestic worker
- Reason for termination of employment

Because EAs provide matching services where they understand the background and requirements of employers to recommend the most suitable domestic worker, it could be helpful for the EA to view the hiring history of employers *before* the domestic worker is confirmed, to facilitate better matching. This is because it enables EAs to ask better questions and initiate more nuanced conversations with employers.

For example, they could ask: "You have had unsuccessful matches with three consecutive domestic workers from Indonesia. Are you sure you want to seek another Indonesian domestic worker? Perhaps there are valid reasons why workers from that specific nationality may not be suitable for your circumstances, let us explore what is the best way forward."

Enabling EAs to view the employers' hiring history is not a silver bullet, but it can make a dent in reducing the number of premature terminations of employment, and assist EAs in making better recommendations as part of the matching services they provide.

According to the **best practices** issued by the Association of Employment Agencies (Singapore) (AEAS), EAs should "[e]ncourage both parties to share as much information as possible, to better ascertain the [Domestic Workers] fits with the household."

2 **There is no incentive for EAs to voluntarily impose additional requirements on employers, because doing so may negatively impact their business**

The primary interest of EAs are to facilitate successful, long-term matches between employers and domestic workers while maintaining profitability. Without MOM mandating EAs to retrieve the employer's hiring history before recommending a domestic worker to the employer, there will likely be uneven adoption and no enforcement.

EAs that choose to impose this requirement of having employers disclose their hiring history may lose customers to EAs that are more lenient and do not have these requirements. Moreover, if domestic workers view the employer's hiring history and declines to work for a particular employer, it limits the available domestic workers which EAs can recommend to employers, further harming their business.

It is also unlikely that there will be a societal shift in mindset where all employers voluntarily express their willingness to reveal their hiring history prior to being matched with a domestic worker. Therefore, the best stakeholder to lead this is MOM through a policy change.

3 **Apart from the hiring history of employers, another piece of information that would facilitate better matching is the household profile of the employer. Furthermore, the hiring history might not reveal the full picture**

The hiring history of employers is just one of many pieces of information that can help improve the matching of domestic workers and employers. Another piece of information that can help is an accurate household profile, containing the following, non-exhaustive, list of information about the household:

- Number of children (and whether they have special needs)
- Number of elderly (and whether they have special needs)
- Number and type of pets
- Cooking workload and requirements
- Cleaning workload and requirements
- Caregiving workload and requirements
- Expectations of domestic worker

An accurate household profile would help EAs and domestic workers better understand potential employers, which may assist EAs in making better recommendations.

Furthermore, the employer's hiring history may not reveal the full picture. Without an understanding of the context surrounding an employer's history, it may seem that an employer with a history of changing multiple domestic workers within a short period is a "bad" employer (e.g. abusive, unreasonable, irresponsible).

MOM considers employers who change domestic workers more than four times within a 12-month period to be "**Frequent Change Employers**", requiring them to attend an Employers' Orientation Programme or an interview before they can employ another worker.

However, an employer with a "bad" employment history may not actually be "bad" - rather, it could just be a matter of poor fit or unfortunate circumstances (e.g. domestic worker borrowing money from a loan shark, a primary care recipient passing away, language barriers, etc).

Just as an employer's hiring history may not reveal the full story, a domestic worker's employment history may not reveal the full story as well. Domestic workers may have had a few of their previous employment contracts prematurely terminated due to no fault of their own (e.g. their employers migrated to another country, their employers were abusive, etc).

Although an accurate household profile of potential employers is useful, Team History Buffs chose to focus only on hiring history for their prototype as EAs already have access to employers' hiring history via an online MOM database.

In contrast, an accurate household profile is not readily available information, especially since a household's profile is constantly evolving. Team History Buffs was unable to pursue household profiles with their prototype due to a lack of time, manpower, resources and access to information.

4

The specific group which may benefit most from this prototype is first-time domestic workers, not the more experienced domestic workers

Seasoned domestic workers who have worked in Singapore for multiple years may have more knowledge of what information to find out about a potential employer (e.g. their household profile) and the confidence to probe deeper with questions. This is important because it ensures that the domestic worker enters into an employment contract clearly understanding the workload and requirements, which can promote a longer-lasting employment relationship.

In contrast, first-time domestic workers may not have the sufficient experience to ask these necessary questions. They may also be more shy or afraid, not daring to ask questions in an interview with prospective employers.

Due to this imbalance in power dynamics, whether real or perceived, first-time domestic workers may not dare to speak up to explicitly request for the employer's hiring history and household profile, even though these are pieces of information which may help them better understand their potential employers.

If domestic workers are not provided with such information about their potential employers upfront, they may be missing out on an opportunity to set the employment relationship up for long-term success.

Providing them with such information about their potential employers, without them having to request explicitly, might help them with making a more informed choice. This serves the long-term interests of EAs, employers, and MOM too, because it may promote longer-lasting employment relationships based on a strong foundation of mutual understanding between the domestic worker and the employer.

5

When pitching potential solutions, highlight how the interests of all stakeholders are better served by longer-lasting employment relationships. Resist zero-sum framing where one party stands to benefit at the expense of the others

The early termination of employment contracts between domestic workers and employers is a situation that is undesirable to all stakeholders. Therefore, if enabling domestic workers to view the hiring history can lead to a longer-lasting employment relationship, it benefits all stakeholders in the following ways:

- EAs save on providing a refund of at least 50% of fees paid by employer if the domestic worker's employment is terminated within the first six months of employment
- Employers save time and effort if they do not have to replace and train a new domestic worker
- Domestic workers benefit from more stable employment
- MOM may encounter fewer disputes in the domestic worker sector

Instead of framing it as a "equal-rights" issue, that paints the employer or EAs in a bad light, framing it as a recommendation where all stakeholders can win could help advance the recommendation better.

The two surveys conducted by Team History Buffs were meant to open up further conversations with MOM and not meant to be the definitive survey for the proposed policy change

Team History Buffs was aware of the importance of proper and rigorous research methodology when conducting its surveys, to ensure that the results are legitimate and useful. However, they lacked resources, money, skilled expertise, outreach and time.

They did not have the funds to commission a professional surveyor and individually, lacked the knowledge and networks to conduct a more rigorous survey (e.g. sending the survey to a representative sample of employers who stay in a diversity of dwelling types such as HDB, condominium, bungalow, etc)

Ultimately, the team decided to distribute the surveys to appropriate respondents (i.e. employers for the first survey and EAs for the second survey), and to as many as possible within our personal and professional networks using Google Forms, in order to open up a conversation with MOM. The Association of Employment Agencies Singapore (AEAS) also helped to distribute the survey to the EAs under their association.

However, this does not diminish the usefulness of the two surveys conducted by Team History Buffs, which sought to be a proof of concept and conversation starter for further discussions with MOM and for other stakeholders. On this outcome, it can be said that the team's methods were appropriate for its intended ends.

Summary of key findings from Team History Buffs' survey

In total, Team History Buffs surveyed 268 employers and 49 EAs. A summary of the key findings are:

- Most of the employers surveyed seemed to be open to enabling domestic workers to view their hiring history. The top reason cited was fairness - "if I can see their employment history, then it is fair for them to see my hiring history." Other reasons include: helping to build trust and goodwill with a domestic worker for a longer-lasting employment relationship, and enabling them to come in more prepared to handle the expectations and requirements of the employer's household. However, this finding may not be representative of all employers in Singapore, given the limitations mentioned above.
- In general, EAs think that the hiring history of employers is more useful for EAs than domestic workers. The top reason cited is that domestic workers may not know how to interpret and utilise the information. Instead, it is the EAs that have the experience to make inferences based on the hiring history, and are in a position where they can probe deeper and ask employers non-confrontational questions about why their hiring history is the way it is, so as to make a better recommendation and increase the likelihood of better matching.

Consolidated Insights: Team Cool Pot



1

Focus on 'unconverted' youths

Through research on initiatives fostering interaction between locals and migrant workers, the team discovered that these initiatives tend to target 'converted' locals. These individuals are already open and willing to engage with migrant workers, offering their assistance and volunteering in this space. However, the team noticed a significant gap in appealing to 'unconverted' locals, those who may not naturally seek out interactions with migrant workers.

2

We can shift mindsets of 'unconverted' youths by helping them discover common values and similarities

After hearing from different stakeholders and trying it out in their prototype, the team learnt that two factors can help to foster a sense of empathy in 'unconverted' youths towards migrant workers: (i) promote youths and migrant workers to share their long-term goals and aspirations with each other and uncovering similarities despite their vast differences in background and (ii) facilitate youths to find parallels between their stories and those of migrant workers (e.g. both have suffered heartbreak when a relationship ended).

One participant in the pilot workshop shared that while he was reluctant to attend the workshop at first, he eventually found it engaging not just because it raised awareness about migrant worker issues, but also helped him to uncover their shared emotional experiences, which helped him feel more connected to them.

Attract 'unconverted' youths by pitching the experiential workshop as a learning opportunity rather than just an awareness event

When the team surveyed the media students who attended the pilot workshop, many mentioned that they attended the workshop mainly because they wanted to learn skills related to their field of study.

Conversations with polytechnic lecturers in media-related diplomas helped us understand that their students were likely to join events with greater learning opportunities and attractive prizes rather than the cause that the event promotes. These youths will want to attend the workshop if they feel it is valuable for their portfolio building.

The team also noticed that many competitions use 'storytelling' elements to attract youths to participate. Therefore, in reaching out to 'unconverted' youths, it is important to highlight that they can learn valuable storytelling skills if they attend.

Lower the barrier to entry for non-media students

Initially, the team focused on reaching out to media students, believing that they would be more likely to be 'unconverted', resonate with digital content creation and have the skillsets to produce high-quality content that can garner significant viewership on social media.

However, during the pilot workshop and competition, they were glad to see a few non-media students in attendance who thoroughly enjoyed the experience. In fact, while media students joined mostly for portfolio building, non-media students from other diplomas signed up because they were curious about migrant workers.

The team realised the workshop had potential to be attractive to non-media students too. Targeting only media students might have been too limiting and not helpful with the broader objective of spreading awareness of migrant worker issues amongst youths. Therefore, they decided to expand the target audience and make the workshop more accessible to students of all kinds.

To encourage greater participation from non-media students, one approach could be to introduce different categories in the digital content competition that caters to varying levels of expertise in creating digital content. For example, there could be a category specifically for beginners, where anyone with a TikTok account can create a simple video and stand a chance to win. This inclusion approach could foster greater engagement and ensure that diverse voices are heard and represented in the competition.

Host a national competition instead of running workshops in schools

The team received feedback during A Good Pitch from a Secondary School teacher that conducting workshops in schools would be a great hassle due to clearance and administrative processes. She suggested that framing it as a national integration competition, with external workshops leading up to the competition, might help the team to bypass red tape and attract schools to nominate their students to represent them in the competition.

Get buy-in of schools by inviting them to the workshop first

The team initially planned to use surveys and testimonials from the pilot workshop and competition to explain the effectiveness of the workshops to schools but they found it difficult to convince educators with just these collaterals - many were skeptical.

One exception to this was a lecturer from Singapore Polytechnic, who not only attended the workshop but also encouraged his students to do so as well. He guided his students who participated in the competition and was open to incorporating the workshop into his lesson plan in the future.

This made the team realise that it is important to invite the educators to the workshop to visualise how it will be run and how their students can benefit. Building a close relationship with this lecturer also helped the team to learn the concerns that educators would have and how to craft a pitch that would allay these concerns.

Team Cool Pot struggled with youth sign-ups for two main reasons

- Scheduling conflicts - the pilot workshop and competition was conducted during their school term, making it challenging for them to find time to commit to attending and creating digital content alongside their existing school work.
- Lack of incentives - many digital content creation competitions are available throughout the year and students tend to prefer competitions that offer greater learning opportunities and attractive prizes. The team's pilot workshop and competition may have been perceived as lacking in these incentives.

It was difficult to get the buy-in of schools due to extensive planning required

The team found that many of the polytechnics they approached required at least 6 - 12 months prior notice to introduce the pilot workshop and competition to their students. Beyond prior notice, the team learnt that schools also required:

- A detailed workshop proposal outlining how the workshop would be run
- A workshop schedule with specific dates and times, aligning to school's academic calendar
- A clear budget proposal for them to assess the financial feasibility of running the workshop for their students
- A clear value proposition on how the pilot workshop and competition would help them achieve their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Results from pilot workshop and subsequent competition showed a significant increase in positive attitudes towards migrant workers

- **More likely to interact with migrant workers** - Before the workshop, 82.4% of students indicated that they seldom / never interacted with migrant workers. The team was thrilled to see that 91.6% rated > 8 on a 10-point scale when asked how likely they would interact with migrant workers after the workshop.
- **From 'foreign' to 'friend'** - Before the workshop, participants were asked to provide a word that came to mind when they heard the term 'migrant worker'. Words such as 'foreign', 'transient' and 'hardworking' were used. After the workshop, the team asked the same question again and was delighted to see words such as 'friend', 'inspirational', 'approachable' and 'caring' emerge.
- **More likely to attend similar workshops** - 75% of participants rated > 8 on a 10-point scale when asked how likely they were to recommend the workshop to their friends and family.

Consolidated Insights: Team Good Company



1

At-shelter workers are the specific group of migrant workers who will benefit from having CVs. For this specific prototype, the team did not focus on work-permit holders in stable employment. It also did not focus on day labourers who are hired and paid on an ultra-short term, day-to-day basis

At-shelter workers are migrant workers who have been retrenched and are in urgent need of assistance to secure another job to stay in Singapore - otherwise they risk being sent back to their home country and having to incur additional financial burden if they wish to fly to Singapore again to work. At-shelter workers are currently staying in Singapore on a special pass and may have been retrenched because their employer:

- Has gone bankrupt
- Facing legal problems, (e.g. due to failing to pay salaries on time)
- Committed a safety violation and is unable to bid for tenders

There are only a few situations when a migrant worker is allowed to switch employers, without having to be repatriated:

- If their employer has agreed via a transfer letter,
- If they are between 21 and 40 days before their work permit's expiry date, or
- If they are an at-shelter worker, e.g. if their company has gone bankrupt and they are temporarily unemployed in Singapore.

Only if the CVs are targeted at at-shelter workers, and not any other category of workers, will all stakeholders benefit and their incentives be aligned in supporting this prototype. At-shelter workers benefit from the CVs by securing a job faster, employment agencies save time, and employers gain a worker.

By scoping down to only the workers allowed to switch employers, the team does not violate the MOM rule against instigating workers to change employers, since this narrow group of at-shelter workers are allowed to change employers.

In any other case, the incentives are not aligned.

For example, if you help work permit holders in stable employment to craft a CV, employment agencies may get into trouble for instigating a change in employer, which is prohibited by MOM; workers may hide their CVs from their current employer so that they do not "overthink"; and employers who have invested in their workers' training may not want their workers leaving.

One additional reason to focus on at-shelter workers is that there are always construction companies which go bankrupt and therefore cases of at-shelter workers. Furthermore, this seems to be an increasing trend as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, as told to the team by representatives from the Migrant Workers' Centre (MWC).

2 **Employment agencies (EAs) are the specific audience that would benefit from receiving CVs, not employers**

The team uncovered two reasons why employers may not be interested in receiving the CVs of blue-collar work permit holders or day labourers who are hired and paid on an ultra-short term day-to-day basis:

- CVs may not provide accurate and verifiable information to employers. When hiring workers, employers prefer to assess their skills firsthand by observing them perform the necessary tasks on-site. This allows for immediate verification of their abilities.
- Employers may only see the value of receiving CVs for S Pass holders, but not for general workers. Employers do not see the need to spend more time evaluating whether general workers are suitable for hiring, via CVs. "I just need workers. If the labour supply company gives me workers who can't do the job, I just ask them for replacement. If the workers cannot do the job, I don't pay them - it's much simpler," said one employer of day labourers who the team spoke to.

However, CVs can greatly benefit EAs by saving them time, which may in turn lead to higher productivity and cost savings as well. With CVs, agencies can quickly understand workers' qualifications instead of painstakingly verifying each certification individually. CVs also allow agencies to highlight workers' strengths to employers and make a case for higher salaries based on their experience.

While teaching at-shelter workers how to create their own CVs may not eliminate recruitment debt, it does offers two advantages: Save time for EAs and eliminate the need for at-shelter workers to pay for CV writing services.

The team learnt that when at-shelter workers without CVs apply for jobs, they often send multiple pictures of their certificates to their EAs. This forces the EAs to individually examine each picture to verify the certificates, which is a time-consuming process. By providing EAs with CVs in a single PDF format, they can save time and potentially increase productivity, leading to cost savings as well.

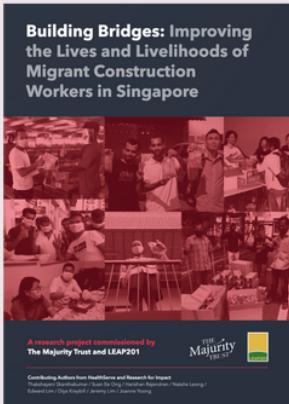
Additionally, some at-shelter workers currently pay third-party scribes in Little India for CV-writing services. However, if these workers learn how to create their own CVs, they can save money by avoiding the cost of hiring a third-party scribe.

When pitching the quantitative benefits of this prototype, it is essential to consider that CVs alone cannot completely eliminate the issue of debt for migrant workers. However, since at-shelter migrant workers face the risk of being repatriated if they do not find another job within the timeframe permitted by MOM, having a CV may help EAs find them a new job more quickly. By securing new employment to stay in Singapore, the at-shelter workers can avoid the additional costs that arise from repatriation.

Reducing the migrant workers' recruitment debt is a complex problem that cannot be solely resolved by CVs. The team learnt that MOM currently does not allow migrant workers to switch sectors (e.g., construction, marine shipyard, process) while remaining in Singapore—they must be repatriated first to be permitted to switch sectors. Unless MOM changes this rule, CVs will not contribute to reducing the agent fees and recruitment costs associated with returning home and coming back to Singapore.

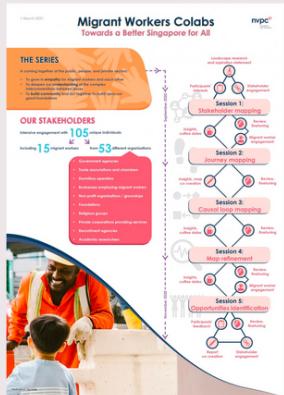
Research Reports Read

These were the various research reports about low-income communities we read to identify broad themes of issues they might face.



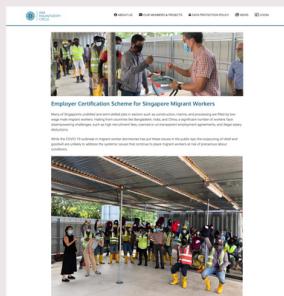
Building Bridges Report | The Majority Trust Report

[The "Building Bridges" report](#) by the Majority Trust highlights the importance of collaboration and inclusivity in fostering social cohesion. It emphasises the need for equal opportunities and empowering marginalised communities to create a more inclusive and harmonious society.



Migrant Workers CoLabs Report | National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre Report

[The Migrant Workers CoLabs Report](#) by the National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre focuses on the integration and well-being of migrant workers. It highlights the importance of community engagement, policy support, and collaboration to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for migrant workers in Singapore.



Employer Certification Scheme (ECS) Feasibility Study | Asia Philanthropy Circle Report

[The Feasibility Study](#) by Asia Philanthropy Circle focuses on the Employer Certification Scheme (ECS) in Singapore. It explores the potential of the ECS in improving migrant worker welfare, assessing its benefits and challenges, and providing recommendations for its effective implementation and impact.

Exclusion of Migrant Workers from National UHC Systems—Perspectives from HealthServe, a Non-profit Organisation in Singapore | Healthserve Report

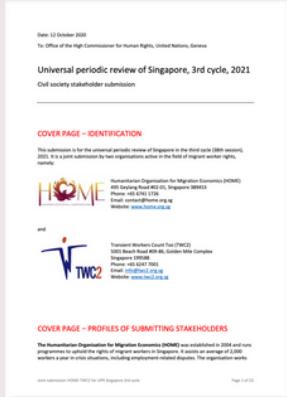
The report by HealthServe, a non-profit organisation in Singapore, sheds light on the exclusion of migrant workers from national Universal Health Coverage (UHC) systems. It presents perspectives on the challenges faced and calls for equitable access to healthcare for migrant workers to address this issue effectively.

Are Migrant Workers in Singapore Receiving Adequate Healthcare? A Survey of Doctors Working in Public Tertiary Healthcare Institutions | Singapore Medical Journal Report

The survey conducted among doctors in public tertiary healthcare institutions examines the adequacy of healthcare for migrant workers in Singapore. It assesses the current healthcare situation, identifies gaps, and emphasises the need for improved access and quality of care for this vulnerable population.

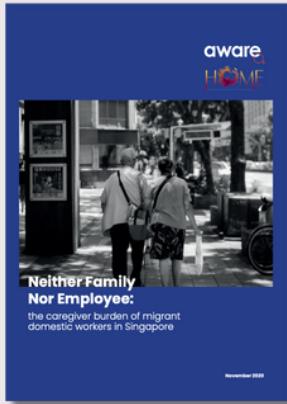
Wage Theft And Exploitation Among Migrant Workers In Singapore | Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics Report

The report by the Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics focuses on wage theft and exploitation among migrant workers in Singapore. It highlights the prevalence of such issues, explores the root causes, and advocates for stronger legal protections and enforcement to address these injustices.



Universal Periodic Review of Singapore, 3rd cycle, 2021 | TWC2 and HOME Report

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) report by TWC2 and HOME examines Singapore's human rights record during its 3rd cycle review in 2021. The report highlights concerns related to migrant workers' rights, calls for improved protections, and recommends policy changes to enhance human rights in Singapore.



Neither Family Nor Employee: The Caregiver Burden of Migrant Domestic Workers in Singapore | Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics Report

The report by HOME delves into the caregiver burden faced by migrant domestic workers in Singapore. It sheds light on their unique challenges, including inadequate support, long working hours, and limited access to social services, and calls for improved policies to address their well-being and rights.



Overcharging and Deceptive Practices in the Domestic Worker Recruitment Process | Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics Report

The report by HOME highlights overcharging and deceptive practices in the recruitment process of domestic workers in Singapore. It exposes exploitative practices, examines the impact on workers' rights, and calls for stronger regulations and enforcement to prevent such abuses in the recruitment industry.

Consolidated Links to Resources

If you are reading a printed copy and do not have access to the hyperlinks mentioned in the Resources section of this guide, this is a compilation of links to all resources that were mentioned, in order of appearance:

Listening Report:

<https://www.agoodspace.org/listening-report-issues-faced-by-migrant-worker-communities-in-singapore/>

Leadership Styles for Success in Collaborative Work:

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/leadership-styles-for-success-in-collaborative-work>

Consent Based Decision Making Models:

<https://www.sociocracyforall.org/consent-decision-making/>

Collaborative Governance Framework:

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/hubfs/Resources/Tools/Tool%20-%20Collaborative%20Governance%20Framework.pdf>

Data Walk:

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/hosting-a-data-walk>

Community Conversations:

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/community-conversations>

Dilemma Circle:

<https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/316071/Events/One%20Day%20Events/2019%20MH%20Masterclass/Tools/2019%20Co-defining%20the%20Dilemma%20TOOL.pdf>

Brave Spaces in Public Dialogue:

<https://www.todayonline.com/commentary/why-we-need-courage-have-open-and-productive-public-dialogue-singapore>

Community Reference System:

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/hubfs/Resources/Tools/Tool%20Community%20Reference%20System.pdf?hsCtaTracking=a32a53b2-3663-4af8-8808-347f8ec2af93%7Ccc0bdebfc-288b-4450-a184-f7352e5aadfc>

Critical Shifts:

<https://synergycommons.net/resources/tool-critical-shifts/>

Gives and Gets:

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/gives-and-gets-tool>

SCAMPER:

<https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/learn-how-to-use-the-best-ideation-methods-scammer>

Social Power - How Civil Society can 'Play Big' and Truly Create Change:

https://smk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/SMK_SocialChangeProject_Digital-Pages.pdf

Community Power: The Evidence:

<https://www.newlocal.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Community-Power-The-Evidence-1.pdf>

How Field Catalysts Accelerate Collective Impact:

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/how-field-catalysts-accelerate-collective-impact>

Funding Field Catalysts: From Origins to Revolutionizing the World:

<https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/funding-field-catalysts>

Social Sector Intermediaries: What Are They and What Do They Need?

<https://www.socialventures.com.au/sva-quarterly/social-sector-intermediaries-what-are-they-and-what-do-they-need/>

Read this guide and interested to try convening a multi-sector collective to address a complex issue you are passionate about?

We can support you with that!

We can share our experiences, tools and lessons learnt to help you shape your initiative. Reach out to us at the contact details below and let's have a chat to discuss further.



A Good Space Co-operative Limited

www.agoodspace.org

admin@agoodspace.org

Vincent Ng

General Manager, A Good Space Co-operative Limited

vincentng@agoodspace.org

vincentngcb@gmail.com

(65) 9829 5138



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COMMUNITIES WE CARE ABOUT.**

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Societies Act (Chapter 62) of the Republic
of Singapore

UEN: T20CS0002H



Email Address
admin@agoodspace.org



Website
www.agoodspace.org



Office Address
30A Yishun Central 1, #01-04, S768796