

 融幼社
 PathFinders

2021

IMPACT REPORT

**PathFinders is the only
Hong Kong charity dedicated
to supporting the unique
vulnerabilities of children born
to migrant mothers**

PathFinders ensures that the most vulnerable and unsupported children in Hong Kong (HK) are protected and respected, and their migrant mothers are empowered to find a path to a brighter future.

Established in 2008 on the belief no child should be born alone and deprived of an identity, basic supplies, healthcare and shelter, PathFinders has improved the lives of almost 9,200 babies, children and women.

Despite legal protections, each year hundreds of expectant Migrant Domestic Worker (MDW) mothers are unlawfully fired and pressured to leave or resign because they, and their employers, simply don't know what else to do.

When this happens, the MDW immediately becomes homeless and within two weeks, when her working visa expires, she loses access to public services, including healthcare vital for prenatal screening and newborn care.

For those unable to return home, their children are typically undocumented, stateless and lack access to essential services including healthcare, shelter and education.

Given limited care options for young children and the elderly in HK, MDWs have become a critical source of support for many households. HK currently employs 360,000 MDWs, many of whom are women of childbearing age and lack access to reproductive knowledge and services.

PathFinders' **CRISIS INTERVENTION** programme provides care, comfort and counselling to mothers and children in crisis. We also focus on **CRISIS PREVENTION** by empowering MDWs to make well-informed life decisions while working in HK.

In addition, PathFinders is seeking affordable and viable solutions for employers to support their household needs when their MDW is on maternity leave (ML).

However, with the number of MDWs employed in HK forecast to rise to 600,000 by 2047 to help care for a rapidly aging population, we fear the problems PathFinders tackles will likely escalate without **SYSTEMIC CHANGE**.

We believe that with imagination, collaboration and a commitment to strengthening protections for the children we serve, practical and affordable solutions can be found. To this end, PathFinders engages in dialogue with HKSAR Government Departments, consulates, United Nations agencies, academics, employment agencies and other key stakeholders to ensure policies are enforced and solutions explored that protect the children and mothers we serve.

ALL CHILDREN DESERVE A FAIR START IN LIFE



UNLIMITED POWER OF COLLABORATION

A note of gratitude from our Board Chair and CEO

As we entered a second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we shifted our 2020 focus of building strength through adversity, to unlocking the unlimited power of collaboration in 2021.

Driven by a deep appreciation that we simply can't do what we do without your incredible support and partnership, we focused much of our time and energy on collaboration and the joining of hands with others to achieve common goals and objectives - one of our core values.

Despite ongoing external global challenges in 2021, the PathFinders team comforted and cared for almost 1,100 babies, children and women. In addition, we saw a 121% increase year-over-year (YOY) engagement of MDWs to prevent a crisis and provide education on the importance of making well-informed life decisions while working in HK. With a view to influence systemic change, we also launched our first public awareness campaign (#WorkingMomsHK) to create empathy and gratitude towards MDW mothers, and rolled out our new Pioneers program to mobilise the next generation as agents of change.

None of this would have been possible without strong collaboration between our valued partners and the PathFinders team, including our 153 professionally trained and empowered Ambassadors. Collectively they achieved 49% of our total MDW engagement - a 425% increase since last year representing significant progress towards achieving our vision of a scalable and sustainable outreach and education model, led by MDWs for MDWs.

As we continue to deliver our Theory of Change and set out even more clearly our desired impact, we remain determined in our commitment to no longer be needed to intervene during a crisis. We look forward to the day when a planned MDW pregnancy is communicated without fear to an employer during the first trimester. We envision a world where all have time and access to affordable solutions to maintain their own household needs (especially child and elderly care) and ensure the job security of their worker, who in turn can continue to access to public services and 14 weeks of ML to establish a nurturing care plan for her child before returning to work.

Ultimately we believe with that imagination, collaboration and a commitment to strengthening protections for the children we serve, practical and affordable solutions can be found that support a pregnant MDW and her employer, ensuring every child receives a fair start in life.

There is no doubt 2022 will continue to present challenges, but with your continued collaboration and partnership in helping to achieve these common goals and objectives we enter the year excited and energised.

On behalf of our Board and the whole team at PathFinders, our heartfelt thanks.

Vivien Webb
Board Chair, PathFinders

Catherine Gurtin
Chief Executive Officer, PathFinders

A LOCAL APPROACH TO ACHIEVE GLOBAL GOALS

As the only NGO in HK supporting children born to migrant mothers, we contribute to a number of international goals, conventions and frameworks.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



The SDGs are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. At PathFinders we contribute to the 10 SDGs that relate more specifically to children.

As a local grassroots organisation we focus on contributing to global goals surrounding Early Childhood Development (ECD) and education, good nutrition, health and hygiene, shelter and removing children from harm. We also seek affordable and adequate childcare solutions for families, if their MDW needs to take maternity or any long term leave.

SDGs Example

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.



16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including Birth Registration.

16.9.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age who's births have been registered with a civil authority, by age.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

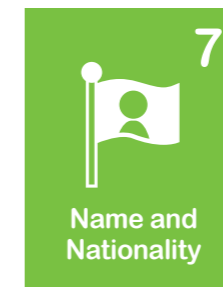
The UNCRC is the most globally accepted standard on children's rights. It consists of 41 articles, each detailing a different type of right. Articles are commonly grouped together under four key themes (Survival, Development, Protection and Participation), with four of the articles (2, 3, 6 and 12) known as "General Principles", as they are fundamental if a child is to secure all other rights.

The UNCRC is a guiding light for all child protection agencies, including PathFinders. Through our work we place strong emphasis on protecting a number of children's rights, including the rights to name and nationality (6), identity (8), contact with parents across countries (10) and review of a child's placement (25).



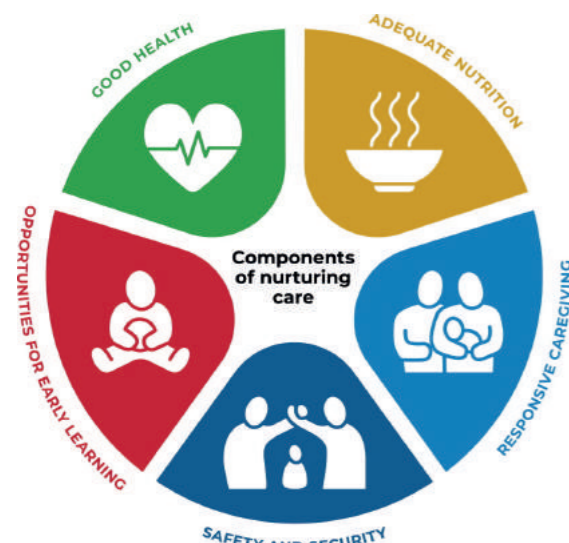
UNCRC Example

All children and young people have the right to a name and nationality, which they should be granted at birth. It also says that they have a right to - as far as possible - know and be cared for by their parents.



7.1 The child should be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents.

The Nurturing Care Framework



The Nurturing Care Framework presents a secure and safe environment created by parents and other caregivers that ensures a child's good health and nutrition, protection from threats and opportunities for early learning, supported by interactions that are emotionally supportive and responsive.

Based on extensive evidence, this Framework reinforces the profound impact of early experiences on a child's development. The most critical is from pregnancy to age 3, as during this period 80% of a child's brain is formed, growing faster than at any other time in their life.

By focusing on this period, PathFinders is helping eliminate extreme poverty and inequality, boost shared prosperity, and create the human capital needed for economies to thrive in one of the most efficient and effective ways.

Nurturing Care Example

Children and their families need a safe and secure environment.

Access to social protection and social welfare - which is not possible without a proof of identity.



Birth registration is the only legal way for a child to get a birth certificate.

Without a birth certificate, children can't prove their age, go to a hospital or to school. They are also at much higher risk of statelessness, meaning they don't have a legal belonging to any country.

Birth certificates also protect migrant and refugee children against family separation and illegal adoption.



The Hong Kong-Born Filipino Sisters who 'Didn't Exist' for 30 years

Dawn and Kaye got by for 3 decades without attending school, seeing a doctor or holding an identity card or passport. Their mother is a former domestic worker from the Philippines who overstayed her visa. Now they want to help others in similar situations.

Read Dawn and Kaye's full story and how PathFinders helped them at www.pathfinders.hk/clients_story



We **INTERVENE DURING CRISIS** to comfort and care for children born to migrant mothers and ensure they have a Nurturing Care Plan in place during the most critical years of early childhood development. We empower migrant women to make well-informed life decisions that **PREVENT FUTURE CRISIS**, and we provide employers with information and advice to enable pregnant MDWs to enjoy their right to ML and maintain job security. We engage with the general public to increase understanding, acceptance and support for children born to MDWs, and inspire **SYSTEMIC CHANGE** by ensuring that policies and solutions exist to protect pregnant MDWs and their children.

08 CRISIS INTERVENTION

Despite ongoing challenges in our external environment, we were able to maintain our Crisis Intervention services and provide counselling, emergency shelter, healthcare, education, supplies and legal support to 1,093 babies, children and women, handling a total of 367 cases and 179 hotline enquiries.

14 CRISIS PREVENTION

We increased our total MDW reach by 121%, thanks in large part to our 153 professionally trained and empowered Ambassadors, who themselves engaged 50,000 MDWs (49%) - a 425% increase over 2020. We continued to provide advice to MDW employers via our hotline and education portal, and increased our outreach with targeted communications on parenting and recruitment platforms.

22 SYSTEMIC CHANGE

We launched our first public awareness campaign (#WorkingMomsHK) to drive media coverage, and generate greater empathy and gratitude towards MDW mothers. We also rolled out our new Pioneers program to mobilise the next generation as agents of change and generated further data to drive the development of recommendations to support employers of a pregnant MDW and influence systemic change.



1,093
Babies, Children
and Mothers Lives
Improved



367
Cases
Handled



97.5k
MDWs Engaged in
Crisis Prevention
Initiatives



153
Ambassadors
Empowered



45
Media
Articles



238k
Social Media
Reach

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE



Vision
All children
receive a fair
start in life



Mission
Ensure the most vulnerable and unsupported
children in HK are protected and respected, and
their migrant mothers are empowered to find a
path to a brighter future.



Values:



Respectful



Passionate



Empowering



Caring



Collaborative



Accountable

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Commitment to strengthen protections for children born to MDWs and facilitate the implementation of viable solutions to enable employers to offer their MDW job security if/when pregnant

General public understand, accept and support protection for children born to MDWs

Policies and solutions exist to protect pregnant MDWs and their children

CRISIS PREVENTION

MDWs make well-informed life decisions while working in HK and offered job security if/when pregnant, ensuring access to public services and ML to support their child receive a fair start in life

MDWs proactively engage and empower themselves about maternity rights, prevent an unplanned pregnancy and signpost PathFinders services, when needed

Employment Agencies enabled to play an ethical role to support MDWs and Employers in the case of a MDW pregnancy

MDW employers informed and supported with viable solutions to offer a pregnant MDW job security

Desired Impact:

- Culture of gratitude and respect for the vital social and economic contribution of MDWs to our society
- Sustainable MDW-led outreach model empowers MDWs to amplify their voice on key protection issues
- Financial support available to assist employers with ML payments
- Affordable and viable temporary support exists to maintain employers' household needs, focused on child and elderly care
- Clarity that MDWs can live-out during ML, with employers' permission

Desired Impact:
Culture of gratitude and respect for the vital social and economic contribution of MDWs to our society

Desired Impact:
Sustainable MDW-led outreach model empowers MDWs to amplify their voice on key protection issues

Desired Impact:
• Increase in pregnant MDWs contacting PathFinders during first/second trimester
• Increase in support provided at enquiry level, as a measure of Crisis reduction and decreased need to access Intervention services
• Decrease in women and children accessing Crisis Intervention services

CRISIS INTERVENTION

Every child born to a migrant mother has access to the essential components of the Nurturing Care Framework during the most critical years of early childhood development

Pregnant migrant mothers access services to stabilise/prevent crisis escalation and equipped to plan for their child's future

Children grows up in a safe and nurturing environment, with an empowered mother to give them the best chance at a brighter future

Desired Impact:

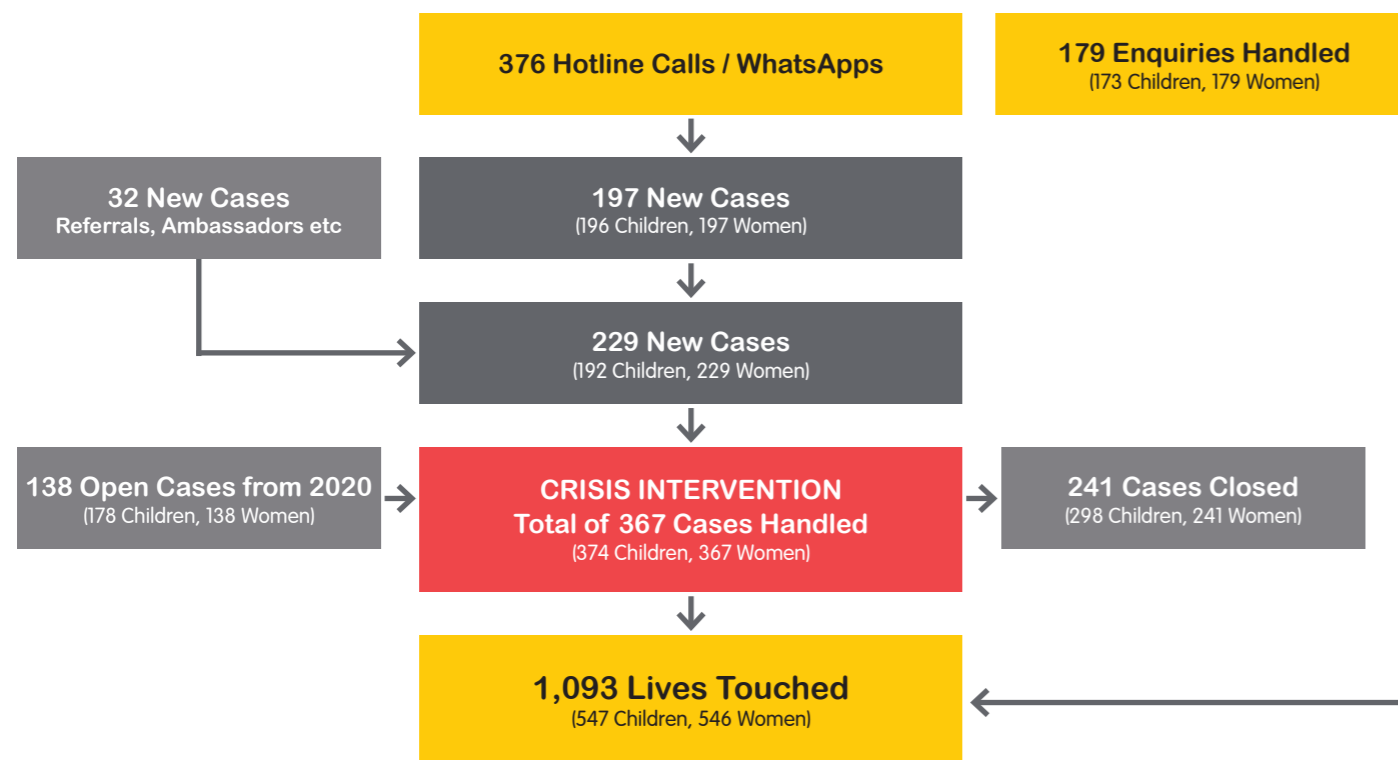
- Vulnerable and unsupported children in HK are protected and respected, and their migrant mothers are empowered to find a path to a brighter future

CRISIS INTERVENTION

Our case workers provide comfort, care and counselling to ensure MDW mothers have access to the critical information and support they need to address emotional, immigration, medical, employment and security concerns.

We provide access to emergency shelter, essential supplies, healthcare and education. We also facilitate referrals to key service partners for more specialised support, including for legal matters, domestic violence, drug abuse, contraception, non-essential supplies and child developmental delays.

In addition, we ensure abandoned and vulnerable children are protected and placed in a loving and stable family environment as quickly as possible.



2021 Highlights - Case trends

Despite ongoing challenges in the external environment, we supported 1,093 babies, children and women through 367 cases and 179 hotline enquiries. The average intake was 19 new cases per month in 2021.

We witnessed a significant increase (15%) in migrant workers approaching PathFinders while still holding a valid visa. As a result they were able to work, access public healthcare services and continue to secure an income for themselves and their families.

This positive trend provides a good indication that our approach to engage pregnant MDWs at an earlier stage of their pregnancy is working. In large part, this can be attributed to our Crisis Prevention programme, that empowers MDWs as PathFinders Ambassadors and community leaders, with knowledge, information and skills training to expand our outreach, amplify our messages and sign post our Crisis Intervention services.

Ratna came to PathFinders 12-weeks pregnant. She felt worried and anxious about her pregnancy and future, as she had lost her job as a MDW and any access to healthcare.

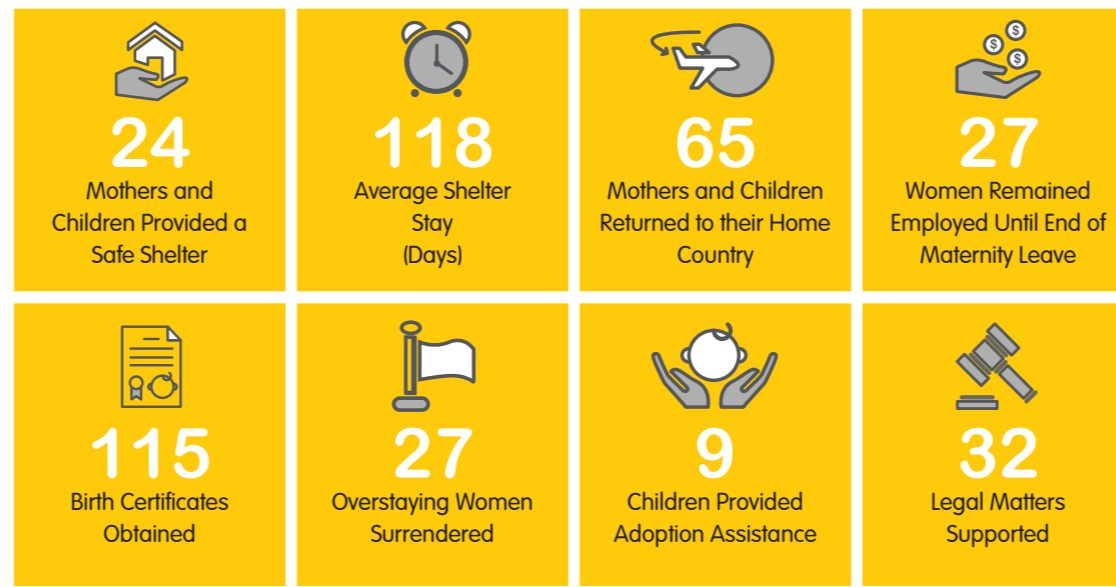
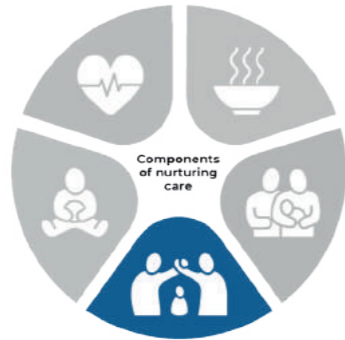
At 41 years old, Ratna's last pregnancy was 13 years ago in Indonesia. When she became pregnant again, she was particularly worried about her ability to deliver naturally, as well as any potential health risks to her baby. The biggest challenges being the risk of gestational diabetes and anaemia during the later stage of pregnancy, which if left unmonitored could cause complications to the baby's growth, resulting in an emergency delivery.

In collaboration with our service partners, Matilda Hospital and Central Health, we conducted regular health check-ups throughout Ratna's pregnancy - including urine checks, blood pressure and fetal heart rate monitoring - to ensure both mother and baby remained safe and healthy. We also arranged for an ultrasound to monitor and ensure healthy fetal development. We were all delighted when Ratna delivered a healthy baby boy.

To empower Ratna with parenting and infant care skills, she attended education sessions at our centre. Supported with knowledge, expertise and experience from our medical team and her case worker, Ratna's postnatal recovery and ability to breastfeed is going well. We will continue to provide support until her baby boy has a birth certificate and access to vaccinations.

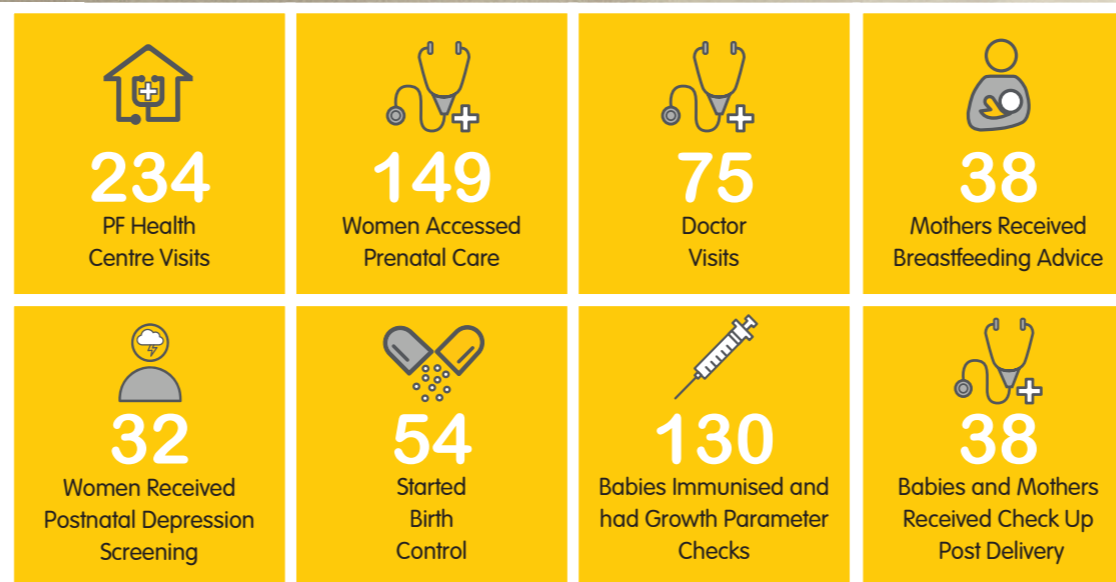
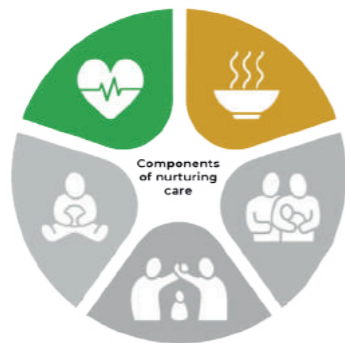
Safety & Security

- Emergency shelter
- Documentation
- Child protection
- Adoption assistance
- Home country return
- Employer negotiations
- Immigration support
- Legal service referral



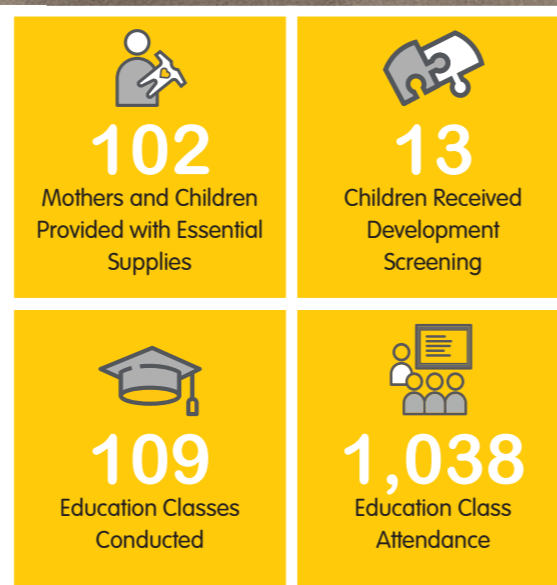
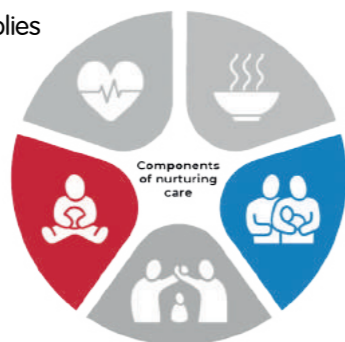
Good Health & Adequate Nutrition

- Access to pro bono doctors
- Pre/postnatal care & advice
- Post delivery home visits or calls
- Postnatal depression screening
- Access to family planning advice
- Immunisation checks for babies & young children
- Breastfeeding support & advice
- Growth parameter checks



Responsive Caregiving & Early Learning

- Essential maternity & newborn supplies
- Child development screening
- Education classes on a wide range of topics
 - Positive parenting
 - Child development milestones
 - Health & nutrition
 - Mothers' empowerment
 - Home country preparation



2021 Highlights - Service Trends

Given the trend of migrant workers still holding a valid visa, we witnessed an associated decrease in Crisis Intervention cases. In particular, we saw a 25% decrease in the overall number of beneficiaries needing pro-bono doctors - a welcome development that reflects our ambition to no longer need to bridge healthcare and service gaps.

We also observed a decrease in mothers and children needing support to return home, as well as requiring shelter, birth certificates and adoption assistance. Our working assumption is given the increase in valid visa holders and fewer unlawful contract terminations, pregnant MDWs were able to return home to give birth, rather than overstaying in HK. However, the impact of COVID-19 and social distancing can't be discounted and we will continue to monitor closely.

We also saw an increase (25%) in the number of women starting birth control and a significant increase (70%) in education classes and class attendance (103). Again, we believe this can be attributed to our increased focus on Crisis Prevention and new collaborations with CEASE Crisis Centre, Baumhaus and One Sky.



When Imelda became pregnant, she resigned from her job, as her workload was too heavy and unmanageable, and she didn't fully understand her maternity rights.

Despite trying to find new employment, no one would hire her. As a result, Imelda faced great uncertainty with her immigration status and could not access public healthcare. Going back to her home country was not an option, as she needed her partner's support. Together, with our partners at Central Health and Matilda Hospital, PathFinders provided a basic prenatal check-up and ultrasound appointment. We also helped secure Imelda's immigration status with support from International Social Service (ISS) and provided her with access to antenatal follow-ups and delivery at Tuen Mun Hospital. When Joshua was born we ensured he received a birth certificate and his father's immigration status as a HK permanent resident. Soon there will be more joy and celebrations as Joshua's parents are getting married.

Despite being pressured to have a termination by the father and not having any support or income, Camelia was determined to continue with her pregnancy.

Baby Love's first days were not easy. She had to initially stay in hospital without her mother and was readmitted not long after being discharged for an infection. Despite all these challenges, Baby Love is incredibly strong, calm and affectionate. Wherever she goes, everyone falls in love with her!

In addition to providing Camelia with shelter and a birth certificate for Baby Love, PathFinders organised joint mediation sessions with the father, together with our partner Equal Justice. Eventually he accepted his daughter, enabling her to receive a HK passport. Given the significant challenges for a MDW to raise a child in HK, Camelia's family agreed to help her look after Baby Love. She returned to the Philippines this Christmas and plans to come back to HK as a MDW to ensure that Baby Love has a brighter future.



Fina had worked as a MDW for 5 years when she discovered she was pregnant. She decided to end her contract and go back to Indonesia.

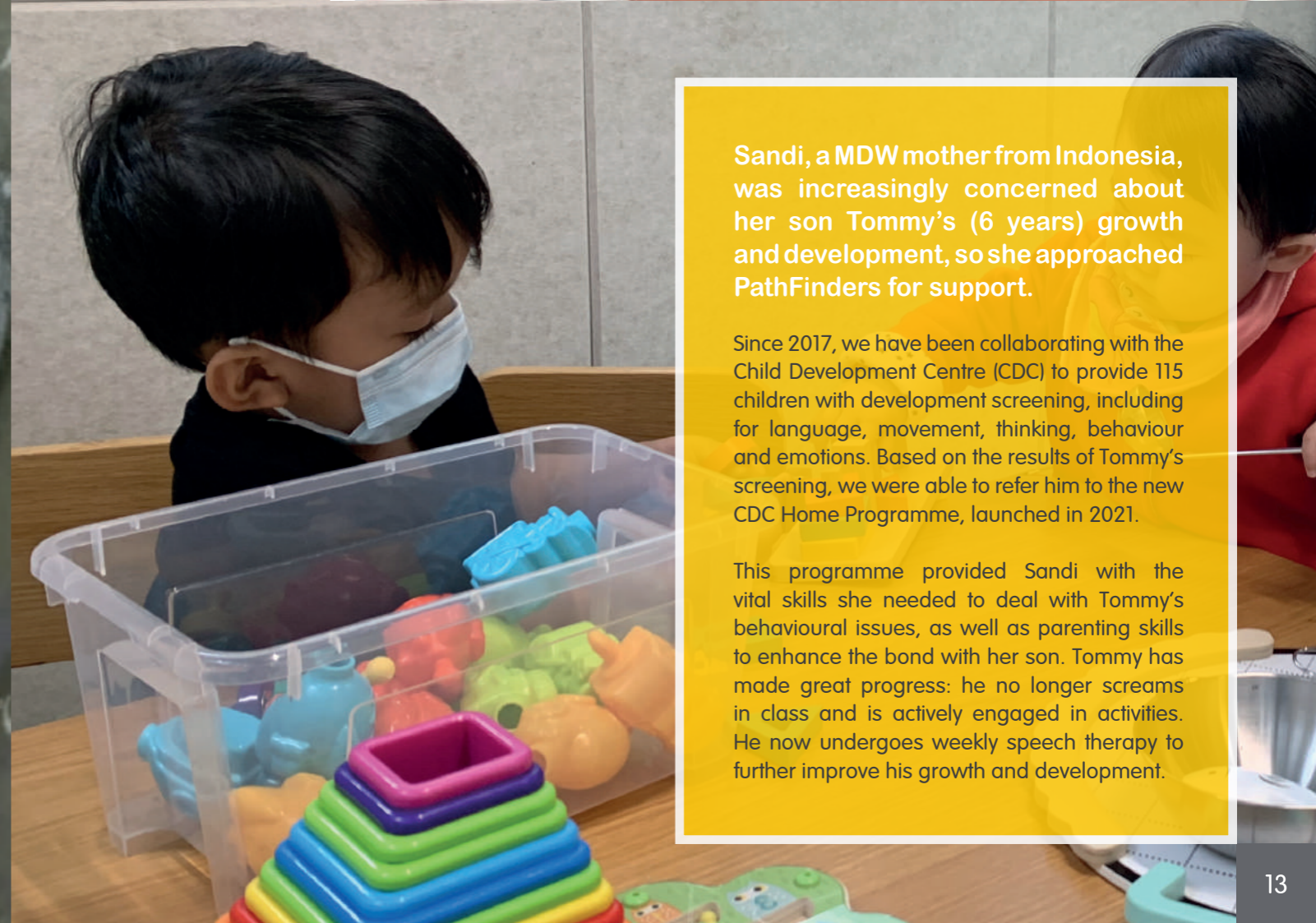
Being pregnant out of wedlock is taboo in Indonesia. Fina's family were furious, leaving her with no choice but to remain in HK. With the father nowhere to be found, Fina illegally remained unemployed, unable to go home and with no extension granted on her visa. This left her child at risk of becoming stateless and unable to access healthcare and education. PathFinders assisted Fina to surrender to the Immigration Department and provided shelter for the duration of her pregnancy. After Chris was born, we also helped him get a birth certificate. We rejoiced with Fina and Chris when her family finally accepted the situation, meaning they could return to Indonesia and be well-supported.



Sandi, a MDW mother from Indonesia, was increasingly concerned about her son Tommy's (6 years) growth and development, so she approached PathFinders for support.

Since 2017, we have been collaborating with the Child Development Centre (CDC) to provide 115 children with development screening, including for language, movement, thinking, behaviour and emotions. Based on the results of Tommy's screening, we were able to refer him to the new CDC Home Programme, launched in 2021.

This programme provided Sandi with the vital skills she needed to deal with Tommy's behavioural issues, as well as parenting skills to enhance the bond with her son. Tommy has made great progress: he no longer screams in class and is actively engaged in activities. He now undergoes weekly speech therapy to further improve his growth and development.



CRISIS PREVENTION

Developing a Scalable and Sustainable Outreach and Education Model

The majority of the 360,000 MDWs currently employed in HK are of childbearing age. Often social and cultural norms in their home countries don't encourage comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education and/or gender equality. This means that many women are not aware of their maternity rights or lack the confidence to stand up for themselves. There is also a widely held misconception that all children born in HK will receive permanent residency or citizenship status.

Through our PathFinders Ambassadors we are empowering MDWs as community leaders, equipping them with knowledge, information and skills training to expand our outreach, amplify our messages and signpost our Crisis Intervention service.

PathFinders Ambassadors are provided with bespoke training to enable them to professionally deliver PathFinders' messages with confidence, accuracy, confidentiality, and in a way that is culturally sensitive. Ambassadors are mobilised with self created materials to hold outreach events and workshops within the community and they are required to regularly update their PathFinders Manager on sessions conducted, numbers of participants reached and evaluation highlights.



2021 Highlights

When we piloted our Ambassadors program in mid-2019 it was at the height of social unrest; we would never have imagined we would be ending 2021 with 153 professionally trained and empowered Ambassadors (up from 74 in 2020), whose passion and energy seem boundless when it comes to engaging and supporting their fellow MDWs.

By the end of 2021, our Ambassadors had helped us engage almost 100,000 MDWs, a 121% increase year on year (YOY), with almost 50,000 MDWs (49%) reached by Ambassadors themselves - a 425% increase since 2020. This represents significant progress towards achieving our vision of creating a scalable and sustainable outreach and education model led by MDWs for MDWs.

As an extension of our team at PathFinders, we are so grateful for the support of all our Ambassadors. They have helped us to reach wider and deeper than we ever could alone. We're looking forward to the further growth and success of our Ambassador programme in 2022!



153
Ambassadors
Empowered



62
Train the Trainer
Sessions

97.5k
MDWs Engaged in
Crisis Prevention
Initiatives

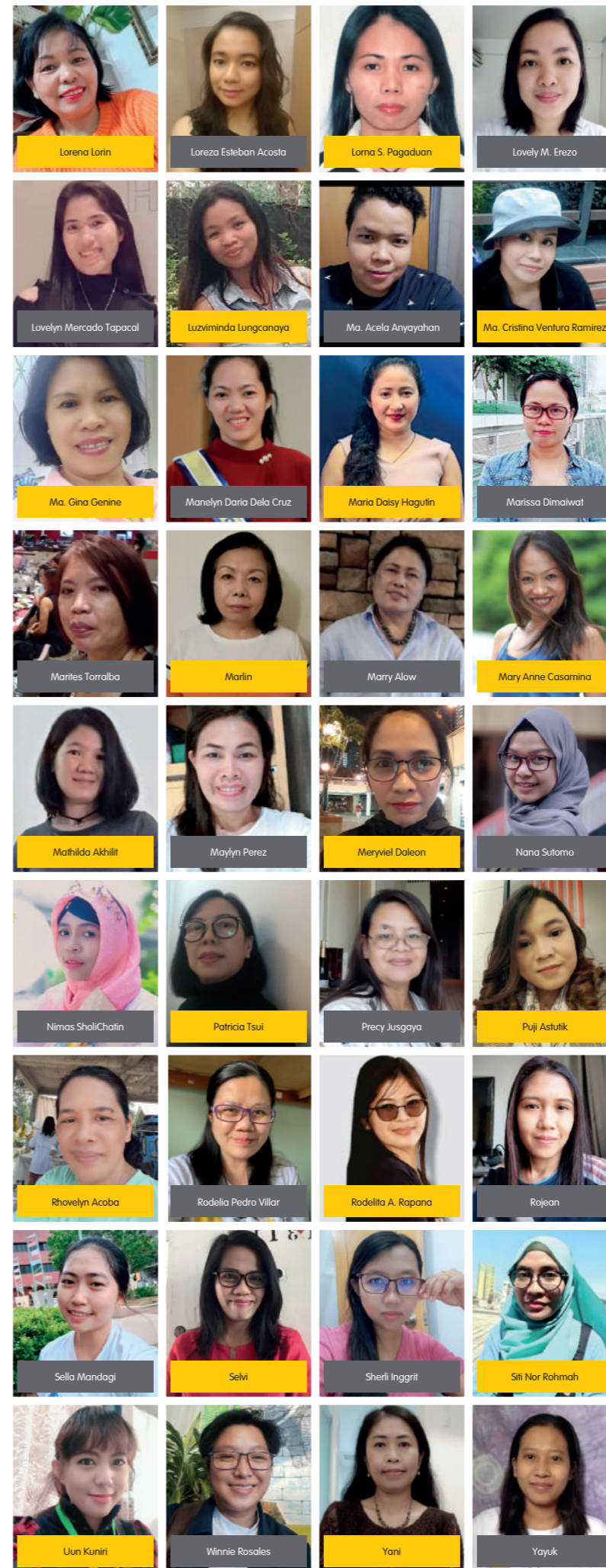
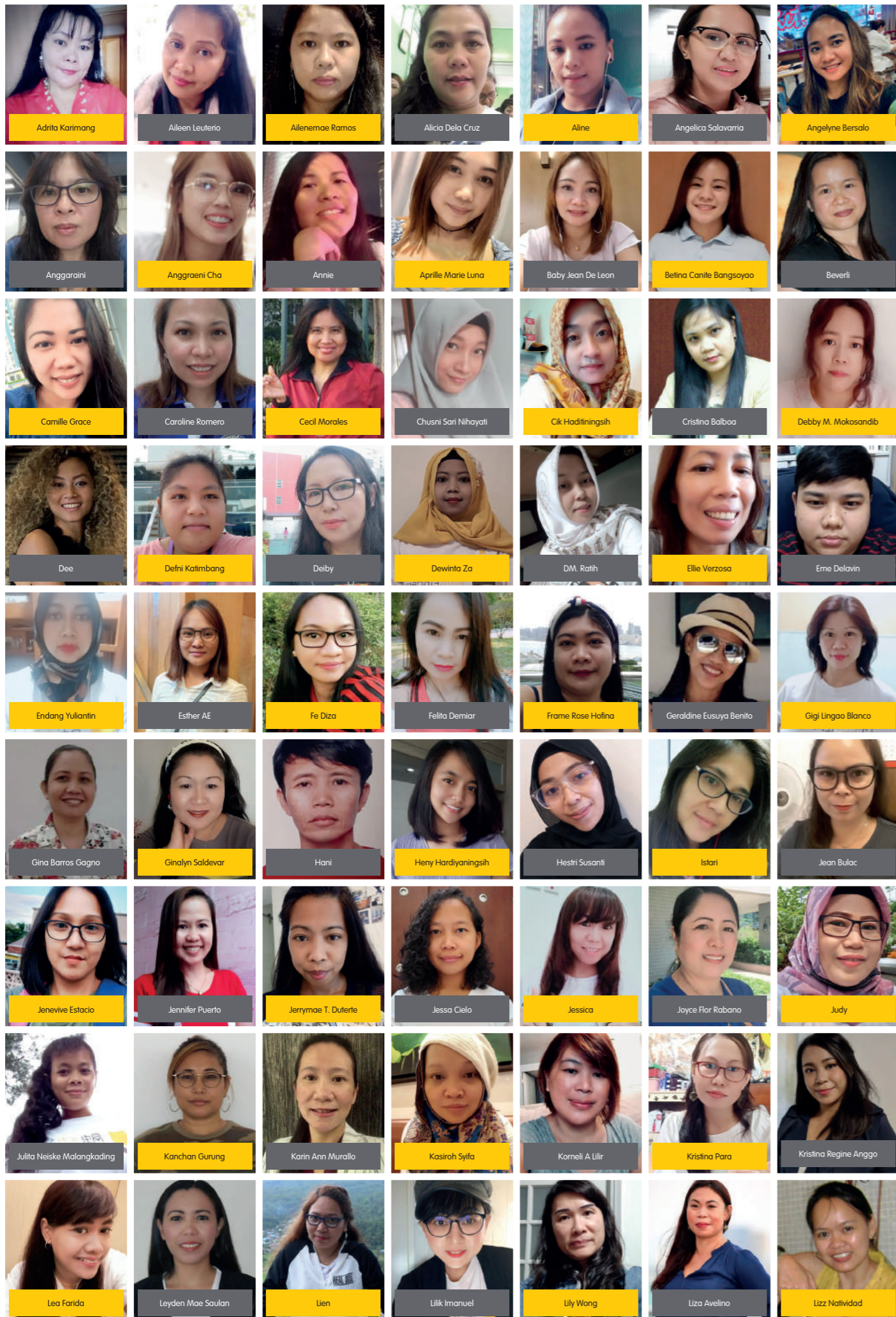
47.5k
MDWs
Engaged by
Ambassadors



547
Community
Outreach
Initiatives

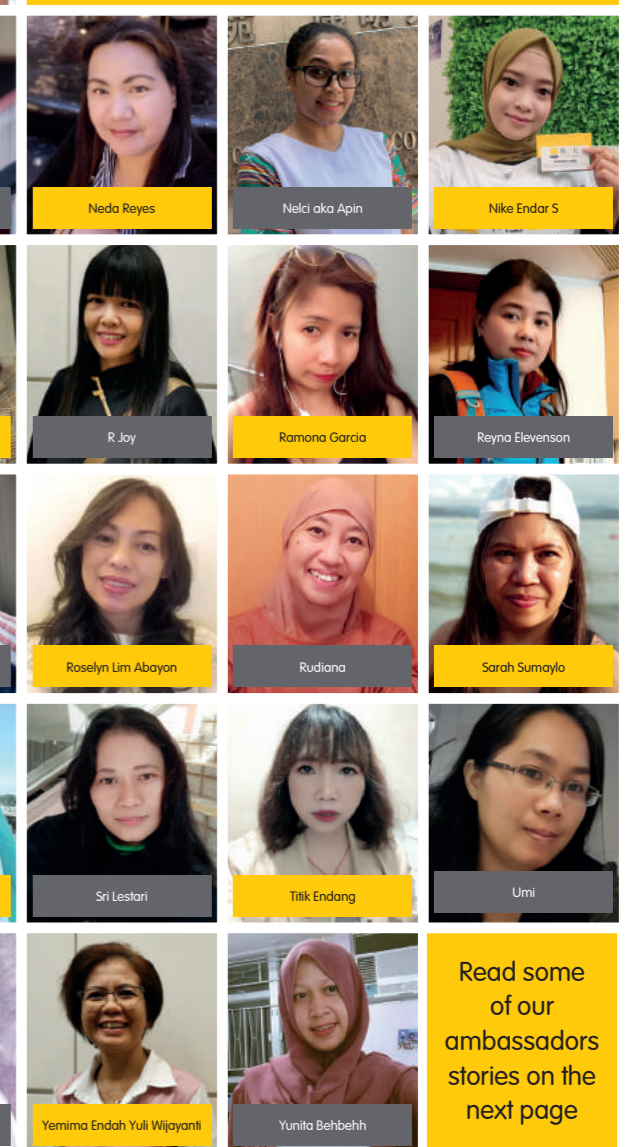


348
Ambassador led
Community
Outreach Initiatives



153
Ambassadors
Empowered

| | | |
|------------|----------|-------|
| 38 | 82 | 3 |
| Indonesian | Filipino | Other |



Read some of our ambassadors stories on the next page



LORNA PAGADUAN

Lorna has worked in HK for 24 years and became a PathFinders Ambassador in October 2019.

“ PathFinders provides opportunities for Ambassadors to raise our voices and share our journeys as MDWs. Being a MDW is not easy. Many have university degrees and professional qualifications, but come to HK as MDWs to work and be better able to financially support immediate and extended family.

It's important for employers to recognise that domestic work is work. That they have responsibilities when employing a MDW, who deserves to be treated with care and respect. Being a MDW is not something to be ashamed of. Success isn't defined by others, but by yourself - in the joy of everyday achievements and goals.



SITI NOR ROHMAH “SNR”

SNR has worked in HK for 3 years and became a PathFinders Ambassador in February 2020.

“ I really enjoy being empowered as a PathFinders Ambassador. It aligns with my passion for Guidance and Counselling, and my interests in self-love and self actualization. I treasure our teamwork. PathFinders staff and Ambassadors are collaborative and active, striving to do our best to connect and engage with each other and our community. This strong teamwork provides a great environment to grow individually and collectively.

This is particularly helpful when talking about sensitive topics, some of which are taboo among our community. Having a strong team to learn and seek support from provides us with opportunities to discuss how to tackle these challenging subjects, using our ideas, interests, passions, strengths and skills to bring all our learnings back to the community.

Being a PathFinders Ambassador is one of my best experiences of being a migrant!

Want to learn more about love and relationships and maternity rights and protections in Hong Kong? Join a training workshop for MDWs to support and empower your fellow MDWs! For more information, please contact Antaria on 9305 5433 for Indonesian speaking and Chloe on 9351 8490 for English speaking MDW.

ELENA VERZOSA

Elena has worked in HK for 8 years and became a PathFinders Ambassador in October 2019.

“ When I was pregnant and working in HK in 2011, I wasn't aware of my maternity rights, so resigned and returned to the Philippines to give birth to my daughter. I then returned to HK in 2014 on a new contract, while my husband raised our daughter.

I wish I had understood my rights and became a PathFinders Ambassador to ensure other MDWs have a different experience to me.



HANIFAH NUR HIDAYATI (HANI)

Hani has worked in HK for over 10 years and became a PathFinders Ambassador in September 2019.

“ In my life people often highlighted to me things 'I can't do'.

Becoming an Ambassador gives me the opportunity to show what "I can do", to prove that I am useful - that I can learn, share my knowledge, gain experience, have good ideas, help and grow. I always look forward to meeting with the team at PathFinders as they are so supportive and uplifting. I am also happy when I can bring hope to pregnant MDWs who feel like they are in a hopeless situation by sharing information and connecting them with PathFinders.

To me, trust is very important as an Ambassador! I trust in PathFinders' mission and vision, that staff and my fellow Ambassadors want to empower me and my community. PathFinders' trust encourages us to do our best, sharing knowledge with those who need assistance and connecting them to a trustworthy organization helps us to gain trust from our community, which enables us to help them and their children.



KARIN ANN MURALLO

Karin has worked in HK for 9 years and became a PathFinders Ambassador in March 2021.

“ I'm passionate about learning and community outreach, with a particular interest in matters regarding family, mothers and children. I had an uneasy upbringing. Being grateful, enthusiastic and having goals helped me to overcome many challenges and struggles. I came to HK with a clear plan, including family goals, which can be shared when engaging fellow migrants.

Being an Ambassador means being a representative for PathFinders in the community; our engagement approach is just as important as the creative methods and message we share with our community.

As a licensed social worker in the Philippines, a mother and a migrant - together with the platform to keep learning, developing our knowledge, ourselves, materials, methods, and ways to engage our community - becoming a PathFinders' Ambassador was an easy choice for me.



CRISIS PREVENTION

Supporting Employers with Information and Advice

A lot of MDW employers juggle numerous roles and daily responsibilities at work and home, caring for children and elderly parents. This is likely why many hire a MDW.

Finding out that their MDW is pregnant can create a unique set of challenges for an employer. Often the employer feels confused, shocked and betrayed. Their mind may race with multiple questions and concerns: She came her to work, why did she get pregnant? My husband and I work full time - can she cope with caring for my young children when she is pregnant? How will we manage when she is on maternity leave?

These are all very real concerns that without careful thought and planning can result in a MDW being unlawfully terminated, pressured to leave or resign - actions that ultimately caused the MDW and her child to fall into a crisis.



Employer Story

Charlie and Fanny have been Mus' employers for 20 years and they share a very close relationship.

Mus has been like a second mother to their two daughters, Ho Yee and Ho Yan; particularly Ho Yan who has autism. Mus has been instrumental in supporting and caring for Ho Yan, and they have a special bond.

When Mus found out she was pregnant with Afiatul, despite the wonderful relationship with Charlie and Fanny, she was still fearful to let them know she was expecting a baby. She struggled with conflicting feelings throughout her entire pregnancy, often feeling afraid to lose her job and letting it affect her relationship with Charlie and Fanny. She also could not bear to bring herself to leave the family she had grown to be a part of.

It was only when Mus was going through labour pain at home when Charlie and Fanny found out she was having a baby. Much to Mus' surprise, Charlie and Fanny never had the intention to end Mus' employment. Though initially upset about being kept in the dark about the pregnancy, those feelings were short-lived. Instead, Charlie and Fanny took the initiative to pay for Afiatul's expenses like nappies, medical care and other essentials, and they mobilised their entire family to offer care and support towards Mus and Afiatul. Afiatul has been living happily in HK together with the Charlie and Fanny's family for more than a year well-loved and cared for by Mus and the Charlie's entire family.

Our Case Worker supported Mus, Charlie and Fanny once Afiatul was born, by giving them sound information so both parties could make informed decisions - in the best interest of Afiatul. After much deliberation, Mus decided to head back to Indonesia this year and raise Afiatul together with her husband and extended family. Charlie and Fanny have committed to financing Afiatul's education and they continue their support and care for Afiatul and Mus across the miles.

Watch the story at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=HIHaUaMILFo

3 Tips to Protect Your MDW From Love Scams



Love scams are on the rise in Hong Kong (HK). The most recent police figures show a 92% increase - 822 cases in the first six months of 2021, up from 429 in the same period last year.

While no one is immune to online/love scams, Migrant Domestic Workers (MDW) are particularly vulnerable. The nature of their employment - long working hours and living-in with their employers - make them more isolated, lonely, and heavily reliant on their smart phones to connect with the outside world (including online dating sites). The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is causing some MDWs to be even more vulnerable, as their employers are restricting their movement and monitoring their whereabouts.

Read the full HelperChoice blog at: blog.helperchoice.com/online-love-scams/

2021 Highlights

Recognising the lack of guidance and support for employers, we continued in 2021 to provide practical advice to employers via our helpline and online education portal.

To ensure MDW employers are aware of our interest and ability to support their needs too, we also increased our outreach via targeted communications and articles with ohpama (a popular Chinese parenting platform) and HelperChoice (an online recruitment platform).

Given the key and central role of employment agencies in assisting MDWs and their employers, we have also increased our support with the launch of an online educational portal for employment agencies.



31,485
Employers Supported



18
Agencies Engaged

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Increasing Understanding, Acceptance and Support for MDW Pregnancy

All working women in HK are entitled, without discrimination, to ML. By maintaining employment, a pregnant MDW is able to access public services and healthcare vital for prenatal screening and newborn care. With job security, she is able to benefit from 14 weeks of leave, which allows for sufficient time to nurture and settle her child with family in her home country, before returning to work to provide for her child's future.

Building on our first public opinion survey in 2020, we launched our first-ever public awareness campaign in 2021 - #WorkingMomsHK - to create empathy and gratitude towards MDW mothers. Through the sharing of stories and multimedia content we set out to increase understanding, acceptance and support for an MDW pregnancy and ensure job security.



2021 Highlights

The campaign launched on International Women's Day 2021 with a photo contest and staggered release of a series of three videos, produced and directed by up-and-coming HK-born film-maker Kristie Ko. We also rebranded Monday as "MomDay", with a weekly social media post celebrating different working moms in HK. On Mother's Day we worked with TVB and other media platforms to feature stories of pregnant MDWs and published an opinion piece in the South China Morning Post urging the community to appreciate the sacrifices of working moms, including the many MDWs in HK who are moms too.

Thanks to our dear supporter Alyson Hau, we were featured twice on Common Room on Radio 3, RTHK, including a show sharing personal reflections from students at five different schools about MDWs. We also significantly increased our Chinese media exposure and were delighted to win the Asian Charity Services and Jockey Club ENGAGE Digital Exploration contest, resulting in the development of a new video.

Another big achievement for us was reaching over 10,000 followers on our Facebook page!



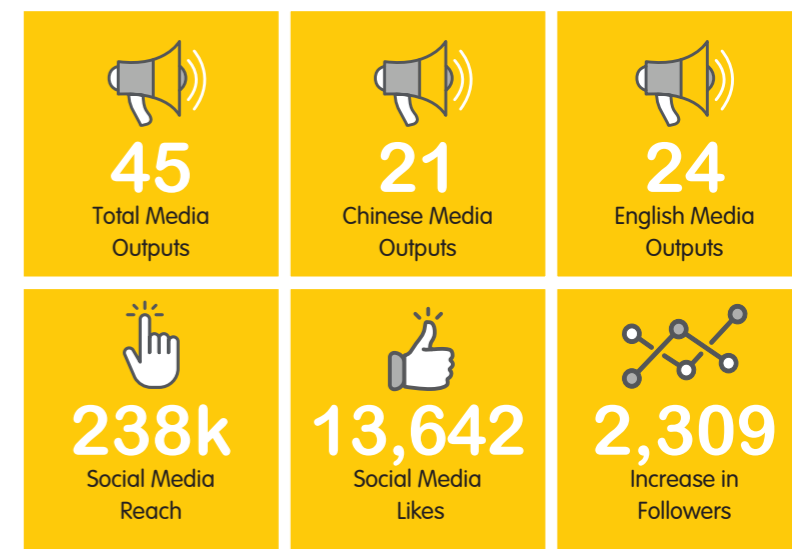
港府對菲律賓、印度等地，實施「禁飛令」超過一個月，返菲的航班相應減料，票價飆升。一早打算完約後便返菲的Marianne (化名)，3月時因身體不適錯過航班，最終在港誕女，目前待航空公司重新編排航期，惟未有回音，「我真的好想回家，我知道自己在這裡的狀況艱難，我已經沒有工作簽證，又沒有親戚幫我照顧小朋友」，支出方面感到極大壓力。協助懷孕外傭的融幼社 (PathFinders) 近日接獲10宗求助，個案經理Lia指以往甚少遇到類似情況，但因菲律賓沒航班來港，單程返菲的航班自然大減，宿舍入住率亦「爆棚」，受助人居住時間更長。

Opinion
Catherine Gurtin

To all working mothers, including Hong Kong's migrant domestic helper mums: thank you

- The pandemic has exacerbated pressure on working mums to balance the demands of work and childcare while receiving little society-wide support
- The foreign workers who leave their own children behind, to play a key role in supporting local families, deserve our utmost respect

Catherine Gurtin
+ FOLLOW
Published: 6:45am, 9 May, 2021

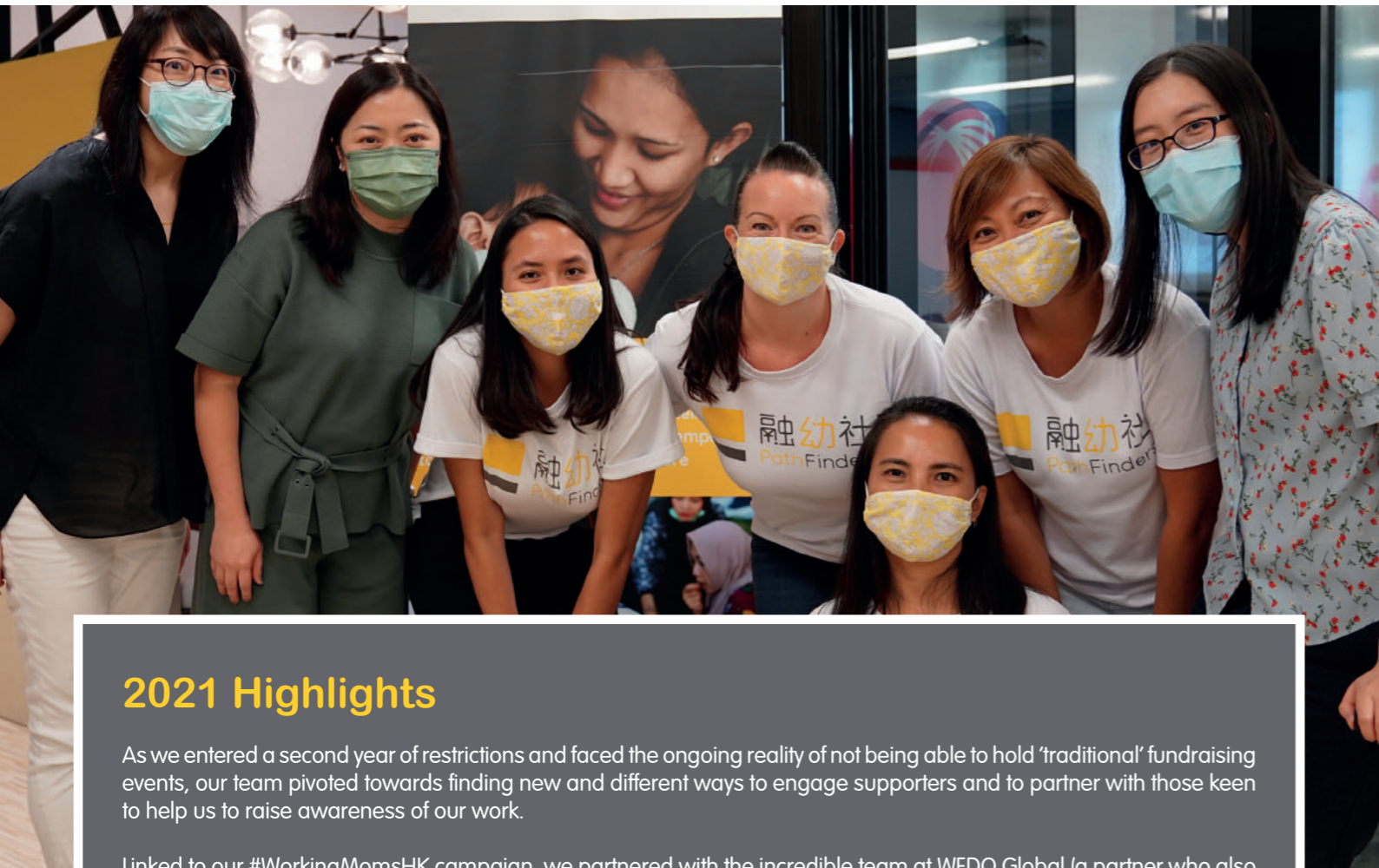


SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Engaging Supporters to Express Appreciation and Respect for MDWs

NGOs face an ongoing challenge to ensure sufficient funds to support clients under our care and to drive real, sustainable change. Due to COVID restrictions, we were unable again in 2021 to hold our large scale annual Fundraising Dinner, which typically generates 30% of our income. In an attempt to bridge this gap, we developed a collection of sunflower-print merchandise as part of our #WorkingMomsHK campaign - including a special edition WEDO Global face masks, a PathFinders tote bag and beautiful sunflower pins hand-made by our Ambassador, Yayuk.

We wouldn't have been able to maintain our services without support from the many people and organizations who stepped up during these unprecedented times. There are many ways individuals, companies, businesses, schools, universities and community groups can support our work, as well as express appreciation and respect for MDWs. If you are interested in partnering with us, please get in touch at: info@pathfinders.org.hk



2021 Highlights

As we entered a second year of restrictions and faced the ongoing reality of not being able to hold 'traditional' fundraising events, our team pivoted towards finding new and different ways to engage supporters and to partner with those keen to help us to raise awareness of our work.

Linked to our #WorkingMomsHK campaign, we partnered with the incredible team at WEDO Global (a partner who also seeks to support the ethnic minority community and employs many working mothers to hand sew their beautiful masks) to launch our <More than a Mask> movement. This partnership was extra special for us, as it also offered supporters the opportunity to show their appreciation for the many MDWs unable to return home since the beginning of the pandemic.

We also increased our engagement with companies via Lunch & Learns, schools that integrated our activities within their learning agenda, and a number of businesses including Feather & Bone, Batik Cantik, Pak Tal Florist and @White, who chose us as their cause-related marketing partners.



We welcome your kind support & partnership

Individuals:
 Become a monthly donor. Put aside an amount as little as \$250 a month (the cost of one lunch!) - it can make a big difference!

Companies:
 Make your next team meeting more meaningful and invite us for a Lunch & Learn or get involved in our Mother's Day (May) and/or Children's Day (November) campaign activities.

Businesses:
 Consider making PathFinders your charity partner for cause-related marketing campaigns or special events.

Schools:
 Engage your students as PathFinders Pioneers and agents of change with specially designed materials and bespoke learning activities (see next page).

Universities:
 Launch a campus contest, invite us for a presentation and explore internship opportunities with our Crisis Intervention, Crisis Prevention and/or Systemic Change teams.

Community:
 Hold a special joint event, including a film screening of *The Helper* with a PathFinders Spokesperson.



You can also support a Supplies Drive to create hospital bags, donate diapers and/or formula, for mothers not able to breastfeed. Please visit www.pathfinders.org.hk/donate-supplies to check what we currently need.

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Mobilising the Next Generation as Pioneers and Agents of Change

At PathFinders we view the next generation as our Pioneers. They are truly a force for systemic and sustainable change driven by their raw passion, fresh perspectives and boundless energy.

Investing in the next generation has significantly increased our engagement with individual students, year groups and entire schools. To educate and engage children in our work we created the Pioneer Pack, an educational and highly-interactive resource for children based on the Nurturing Care Framework. Besides acquiring knowledge, children can cultivate character values (kindness, empathy and generosity), confidence and leadership qualities in the process of completing the activities and challenges.



2021 Highlights

From participating in internships to a wide range of volunteer activities, such as research, content development, video production, translation and packing of supplies, no task has been too small nor obstacle insurmountable for the next generation when it comes to supporting our work.

We are so grateful for the many wonderful opportunities to work with individual students, year groups and entire schools, including Anfield School Hong Kong and South Island ESF School. We were also delighted to reach more young people through the Common Room on Radio 3, RTHK (twice!).

We are particularly impressed with COEXIST (www.coexisthk.com), a youth-led migrant worker advocacy group, and one of our key collaborators for our Mother's Day greeting card competition. Nothing made us more proud and elated to join the FIRST-EVER 100% youth run and led UN event in Hong Kong on International Migrants Day too!



CityU - Children's Day Awareness Activities



COEXIST - Mother's Day Greeting Card Competition



Discovery Bay - Pioneers Bake Sale



South Island ESF Making Links Fair



The Pioneer Pack

PathFinders is on a mission to ensure that all children have a fair start in life. This reality starts with a young generation who believes in a kinder world. We believe our Pioneers can lead the way!

Designed for children aged 6-12 years, the Pioneer Pack is bursting with fun and educational activities. It helps children understand PathFinders' work, grow in confidence and practice generosity. They can also earn up to 5 certificates of achievement and badges after completing each challenge.

For more information email us at pioneers@pathfinders.org.hk

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Joining Hands to Highlight the Vital Social and Economic Contributions of MDWs

In June, PathFinders spearheaded a joint social media post, supported by 21 other organisations that work with MDWs, to mark International Domestic Workers' Day and emphasise that Domestic Work is Work. We were delighted this was followed up in July by 10 of the organisations involved to form the MDW Coalition.

By the end of 2021, 14+ organisations had joined the Coalition, with the goal of encouraging greater collaboration and the creation of new pathways for people to share ideas, resources, and support for the MDWs in HK.



2021 Highlights

Over the course of six months, Coalition members worked together to launch two projects:

1. a shared data project, which resulted in the first open, consolidated library of research and reports published by NGOs on the MDW experience in Hong Kong; and
2. the first Celebration of Care Festival, which celebrated MDWs and their many talents at the Central Star Ferry Terminal on December 19, 2021—the day following International Migrants Day.

The festival, which was co-created in partnership with MDW volunteers and Ambassadors from across communities in HK (including many of our own PathFinders Ambassadors!), provided a new platform for NGOs and MDWs to unite and “care for those who care for us.”

The festival and the Coalition were recognised in *The South China Morning Post* and *The Hong Kong Free Press*. The Coalition will continue to grow and work together on joint programs and solutions in 2022. To learn more visit: www.hongkongcares.org.



International Domestic Workers Day - June 2021

Globally, one in every 25 women is a domestic worker. If she is working overseas and outside of her own country, she is referred to as a Migrant Domestic Worker (MDW).

Affectionately in Hong Kong we refer to MDWs as ‘helpers’ – but they don’t just help, they work for and with an employer. In many cases, given limited options for child and elderly care, a MDW is often employed to enable many in Hong Kong to be able to work too!

So today, on International Domestic Workers Day, we are calling for greater recognition that Domestic Work is Work.

Let’s join hands today, and every day, to express our appreciation and gratitude for the vital social and economic role MDWs play in our society, especially in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic which has further exacerbated many of the inequalities they face.

International Migrants Day: It’s time to care for those who care for us

International Migrants Day should be used as an opportunity to inspire positive behavioural change and tell our domestic workers how much they are appreciated, says Catherine Gutrin, CEO, PathFinders on behalf of the NGO Coalition.

by GUEST CONTRIBUTOR
11/29, 19 DECEMBER 2021



Today, across the world, communities are celebrating International Migrants Day, a day that marks the adoption by the United Nations of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and aims to raise awareness about the challenges and difficulties of international migration.

Over the past few months, 14 organisations supporting and empowering migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong have come together to work collectively on community-wide initiatives that highlight the vital social and economic contributions of domestic workers to our society.

CELEBRATION OF CARE

Caring for those who care for us.



JOIN US!

Thank you to our partners:



@careatworkHK


#CareHK

SYSTEMIC CHANGE


Driving the Development of Data Based Solutions

All working women in Hong Kong are entitled, without discrimination, to 14 weeks of ML. By maintaining employment, a pregnant MDW is able to access public services and healthcare vital for prenatal screening and newborn care. In addition, with job security an MDW is able to benefit from ML – allowing sufficient time to nurture and settle her child with family in her home country, before returning to work to provide for her child’s future.


Given limited care options for young children and the elderly in HK, MDWs have become a critical source of support for many households. Far from being an extravagance, hiring a MDW enables many mothers and daughters to work and earn an income. In fact, given the number of MDWs employed in HK is forecast to rise from 360,000 today to 600,000 by 2047 to help care for a rapidly ageing population, we fear the problems PathFinders tackles will likely escalate without the availability of practical and affordable solutions for employers to address:



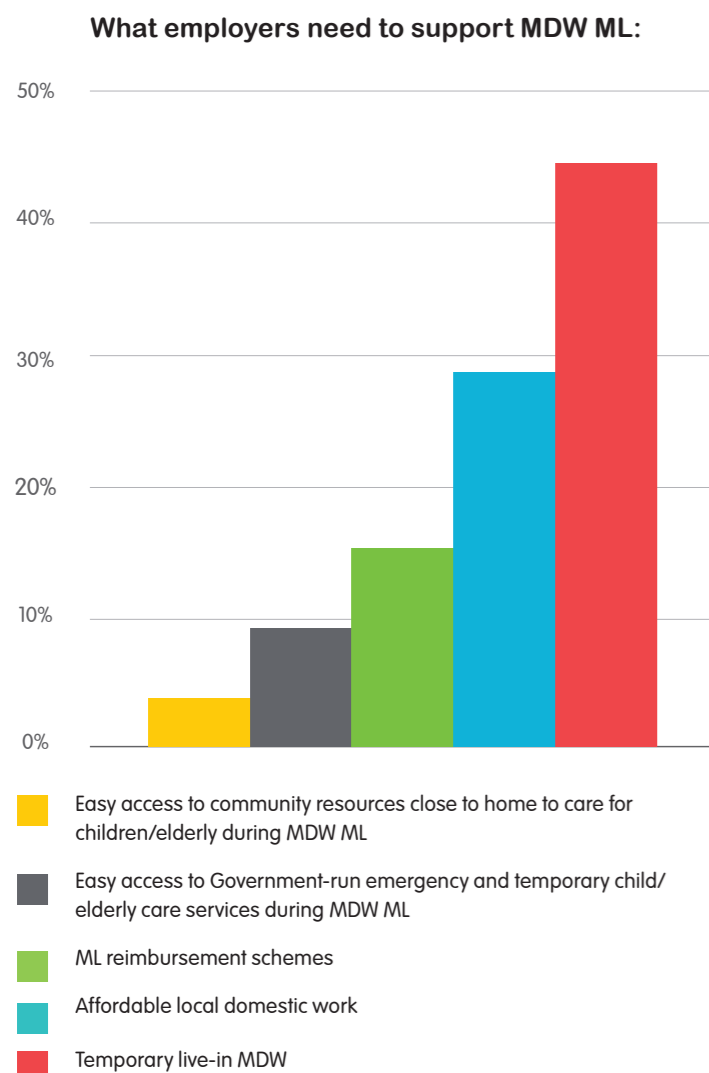
Financial stress of ML pay & the cost of alternative temporary help



Lack of available and viable options to provide temporary support, during the ML period.



“Live-in” policy that requires a MDW to live in the employer’s home.



Employer Attitudes Toward MDW Pregnancy

In our 2021 employer survey, 84% of respondents believed they could terminate an MDW if her pregnancy prevented her from completing job duties, despite the law stating otherwise.

When presented with alternate options, however, employers indicated they wanted constructive solutions.

44% said that having a temporary MDW cover the duties of an MDW on ML would be the most helpful solution. Currently, the standard two-year employment agreement prohibits MDWs from working short-term contracts. Additionally, the ‘live-in’ requirement amplifies the problem of constrained residential spaces and prevents employers from simultaneously housing two MDWs.

The third most popular solution is reimbursement of MDW ML salary (16%). While employers are reimbursed 4 weeks of ML pay, they must cover the remaining 10 weeks. For lower and middle income households (88%), the financial burden and urgent need for alternative child and elder care options are especially worrisome.

2021 Highlights

In 2021 we further explored practical and affordable solutions to support employers in ensuring their pregnant MDW’s job security.

Specifically, we initiated research to explore solutions that would:

- Reduce financial stress through the creation of an insurance premium to cover MDW ML payments through cross-sector partnerships
- Offer affordable temporary support to employers to maintain the smooth functioning of their households, including the care of dependants - modelled on regional trial schemes
- Clearly define the current “live-in” policy, as it applies to ML, so that living out is a solution pregnant MDWs can opt for while remaining in compliance with labour and immigration regulations

While much of this work is incredibly ambitious and not without challenge, we strongly believe that with imagination, collaboration and a commitment to protecting the children we serve, equitable solutions for all stakeholders can be found.



Despite being in a long-term relationship, conceiving Noellyn was completely unexpected for Leyden and her partner. It was nothing short of a miracle, as she had a medical condition which made it almost impossible to conceive.

Leyden’s pregnancy was difficult and high-risk, requiring plenty of bed rest and making it tough for her to perform most of her work tasks. Fortunately, her mother was also an MDW working for the same employer and could cover Leyden’s tasks, when needed. Leyden’s employer, was overjoyed about the pregnancy and graciously made room for the family in her home when Nolleyn was born so she could be raised by her mother and grandmother.

Leyden’s unusual circumstance - to have such strong support from her mother and employer - made her extremely grateful and empathic towards fellow pregnant MDWs, who typically have the opposite experience. Leyden is now an active PathFinders Ambassador who regularly spreads awareness about maternity protection and planned parenthood to the MDW community in HK!

Leyden and Noellyn represent one of our very few fortunate cases. Many employers in HK simply cannot afford and/or do not have the space to accommodate a migrant mother and child. In contrast, we typically witness a migrant mother and her newborn separated in the most important days and weeks after birth, due to the ‘live-in’ policy, but no employer obligation to house the child.

The reality is that many MDWs and their children remain at risk of becoming unemployed and homeless, unless employers are supported with viable solutions. It is this reality that drives us in our intention to do even more to support both employers and MDWs, so that every child born in HK has a fair start in life.

OUR TEAM

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed. It is the only thing that ever has.”
Margaret Mead

We are so proud of our achievements in 2021. What makes us even more proud is our brilliant Board and team who made all these achievements possible!

2021 was yet another year full of challenges and uncertainties. As we celebrate the success of another fruitful year in our mission to ensure all children receive a fair start in life, we reflect on how fortunate and grateful we are to have such an incredible and passionate team that works tirelessly and fearlessly to achieve and thrive in an ever-changing environment.

We can't thank our team enough for their strength, courage and perseverance when it comes to protecting and supporting some of the most disadvantaged mothers and vulnerable children in HK.

Adding to the daily challenges we tackle in the community, many of the team are parents of young children and carers to other family members at home. Conquering the stress and anxiety at home and work is no easy task, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, which also compounded the ability of many of the team to visit family overseas, due to prolonged travel restrictions.

While missing loved ones, we feel so fortunate to work together as a family for families to create a positive and meaningful impact, not only on people's lives but also on our society!



THANK YOU

TO ALL OUR PARTNERS

Alone we are strong. Together we are stronger!

A big thank you also to our Ambassadors and all Government, Service, Community and Campaign partners. It is such a privilege to count you among our friends and allies as we strive towards a fair start for all children in HK.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



SERVICE PARTNERS



COMMUNITY PARTNERS



CAMPAIGN PARTNERS



All
Children
Matter

以及人之幼