



# EMERGING INSIGHTS

06

LABOR & MIGRATION

# Protecting a mobilized labor force

## GLOBAL ISSUES

While there is evidence to suggest that worldwide unemployment rates have been steadily declining, this trend has not coincided with a similar decline in low-quality and dangerous working conditions.



In 2018, 3.3 million people did not enjoy economic security, material well-being or equality in opportunity and 700 million people continue to live in poverty even though they are employed.<sup>12</sup>

Labor and migration go hand-in-hand. Lack of employment and labor conditions are a big reason that workers make the journey across international borders to seek economic opportunity. In 2018, there were 164 million migrant workers, most of whom should be the most vibrant and productive members of their home country's workforce.<sup>13</sup>

12. International Labour Office. World employment and social outlook: trends 2019. Geneva: International Labour Organization, 2019.

13. ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers – Results and Methodology (December 2018) - World. International Labour Organization, Dec. 2018.

## THE HEADLINES

**Union membership in the US keeps on falling, like almost everywhere else**

*Quartz 2/5/2019*

**Picked by slaves: coffee crisis brews in Brazil**

*Reuters 12/12/2019*

**Japan loves robots, but getting them to do human work isn't easy**

*New York Times 12/31/2019*

**Hong Kong's domestic workers feel caught between both sides in information war**

*The Washington Post 10/23/2019*

## NEW IDEAS

**This year, Ashoka Fellows are working to solve many of the fundamental issues at the heart of labor migration.**

They are tackling the complicated networks of cross-border employment by going to employment agencies, companies and domestic employers to shift mindsets toward equitable pay and fair conditions. They are also working to revive and create industries in their home countries, to provide opportunities that provide an antidote to migration. Their work shows new avenues to overcome unequal and unfair labor practices worldwide.

## Globalized movements for migrant workers

There are an estimated 11.5 million migrant domestic workers around the world; 380,000 workers, mainly from the Philippines and Indonesia, work in Hong Kong. By law, migrant workers are required to use employment agencies in order to seek employment in Hong Kong, a system that is rife with abuse. A 2016 report by the Justice Centre found that 1 in 6 domestic workers in Hong Kong was forced into labor and 31% do not feel they are able to change their employer due to a high debt burden that begins before they've even arrived.<sup>14</sup> **Scott Stiles** is working to change this pattern of debt bondage and exploitation with his organization, the Fair Employment Agency (FEA). He has removed the fee for migrant job seekers and focuses on quality and professionalism as a means of attracting employers to cover the costs. Since its founding,

## Democratizing labor rights

The rise of new forms of labor and disruptive industries has led to a decline in traditional labor protection systems worldwide. This problem has been especially acute in the United States where organized labor has been drastically weakened as gig economies take hold. **Michelle Miller** is solving this problem with her organization Coworker.org which empowers any worker to be able to advocate for improved working conditions and wages. The platform enables workers to start campaigns to advocate for changes in their workplace. Employees can join together and win change for themselves and others. Since its inception, worker-led victories have included expanded family paid leave at Starbucks, in-app tipping with Uber, a wage increase for REI employees and the elimination of product sales goals at Wells Fargo.



FEA has become the largest migrant worker recruiter in the country, taking 5% of the market share. Scott is now focused on building a recruitment agency in Manila to tackle the migrant labor problem at its source.

In Singapore, foreigners, including both expatriates and domestic workers, make up 40% of the labor force, from Bangladesh, China, Thailand and Indonesia are mainly employed in construction, manufacturing and shipping and are in the country with 8-10-year legal work passes. Despite having legal status, they tend to live on the margins of Singaporean society, in substandard housing and without access to education or other tools to improve their skills or knowledge. **Sazzad Hossain** developed the Social Development Initiative, or SDI Academy, to help migrants and refugees improve their personal development during the time they spend in the country. The academy focuses on English language acquisition, IT and computer literacy, and entrepreneurship training that makes them more efficient and productive workers and equips them with skills to take back to their countries of origin. Since 2013, over 7,500 students have been trained and more than 120,000 people have been engaged in building out more supportive ecosystems for workers to thrive in Singapore and beyond. Sazzad is working with accelerators in Bangladesh to promote entrepreneurship for returnees.

In Bangladesh, **Nazma Akhter** is democratizing the fight for labor rights with the Awaj Foundation, which catalyzes women-led organizations to address issues in the ready-made garments industry. The sector accounts for 20% of Bangladesh's GDP, but is also home to disparaging working conditions, weak labor laws and human rights violations. Garment industry trade unions began to organize in the 1980s, but the leadership in these organization did not represent women who make up the majority of workers in the sector. Nazma has taken a holistic approach to encourage women-led change in the field of labor rights. Workers' cafes provide women with legal aid and health services trainings, train workers and managers on legal rights and responsibilities, and build coalitions between factory workers, owners and the government to advocate for workers' rights. Awaj Foundation is the largest provider of legal aid in the country and has helped over 16,000 individuals access support.

## Maintaining tradition for economic vitality

**Dinny Jusuf** is working on the other end of international labor migration, revitalizing a traditional industry to enable potential migrants to have economic opportunity at home in Indonesia. Driven by poverty and limited economic opportunities, 9 million Indonesians work

14. "Coming Clean Report." Justice Centre Hong Kong, Mar. 2016.



overseas; 67% of them are women.<sup>15</sup> Dinny's organization Toraja Melo is tackling this out-flow by revitalizing the market for traditional weaving. By working alongside fashion consultants in Jakarta to market the product, Dinny has organized women's cooperatives in four locations in the countryside where women engage in peer-to-peer support and learning. 1,000 women across these locations have joined Toraja Melo and some are even returnees from domestic work abroad. Weavers have seen 200-300% increases in income. Combined with community-based tourism and other models

of economic empowerment, Toraja Melo plans to expand by five-fold over the coming year.

Similarly, **Dan Driscoll** knows that tradition can bring modern solutions to economic inequality. The artisan sector in Morocco has seen a steady decline in participation, with an average 17% dropping out each year – from 1.1 million artisans in 2007 to just 300,000 artisans in 2016. The decline in participation in the artisan sector does not match the demand for hand-made Moroccan products. The discrepancy can be explained mainly as the result of deep-rooted and legalized middleman exploitation where brokers often keep 96% of the final price – a reality which

has been supported by unfair legislation that made it illegal for an artisan to sell products internationally on their own. Dan's solution has been to dismantle these structural barriers through technology (a platform for artisans' work), policy changes and advocacy, cooperative restructuring and supply change reform. The company, Anou, is artisan-led, linked by technology, engages in collective bargaining, and drives changes in legislation and middle-men negotiations. They have a network of 70 cooperatives, 600 artisans, see annual sales over 2 million Moroccan Dirhams, and control 2.5% of Moroccan exports to the United States.

15. Missbach, A. (2018). Indonesia: A country grappling with migrant protection at home and abroad. Migration Information Source. September 19, 2018.

## HOW TO:

### Make retail work aspirational

India is a country of shopkeepers: retail is the second biggest industry in the country after agriculture. As an industry of \$1.3 billion, it is one of the largest in the world. Despite this, working in the retail sector is often cast as a low-wage, undesirable position. It has been stigmatized as a job for desperate, uneducated and unskilled members of society. In this environment, retail owners have not had many incentives to upskill or create pathways for advancement for their workers.

**B.S. Nagesh** had an early passion for retail management. With new technology and improved systems and processes, Nagesh built one of India's largest retail conglomerate, Shoppers Stop, and founded the professional Retail Association of India. At the height of all his success, he was troubled by the opportunities available for workers. He founded TRRAIN (Trust for Retailers and Retail Associates of India) to change mindsets nationally and to create professions rather than jobs. The "Retail Employees' Day" celebrates retail employees and their contributions and annually holds Retail Awards where CEOs of India's biggest retailers, along with celebrities and media, share in the stories of service. He is spreading his Pride-Respect-Inclusion-Skill model and hundreds of retailers across the country are seeing the business sense in lifting up retail associates.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

Why work with one social entrepreneur when you can bring together many? Ashoka's Venture program finds and identifies social entrepreneurs around the world to help them achieve their vision for systemic change, Ashoka's Fellowship program connects Fellows within countries, regions and across the globe – for peer support, for ideas exchange, and for collaborative enterprise. In 2019, fellowship events around the globe included the European Changemaker Summit in Barcelona where 50 fellows from across Europe connected, celebrated, learned and collaborated with 1500 participants. Partnerships with Google, BMW Foundation, Boehringer Ingelheim, Glovo, Sage Foundation, Danone and Caixa Bank enabled the multi-perspective, multi-day event. In Nairobi, Fellows from across the continent met for two days of collaboration and leadership in partnership with the British Council and supported by Boehringer Ingelheim, Mars Wrigley, CTA, UNDP, and Thomson Reuters. Across the United States, Fellows embarked on a Welcome Change tour with themed events in five cities, where they met and helped to give context to issues like legal innovation, building changemaker movements, racial healing, rural innovation and climate change. Connecting Fellows to each other to expand their opportunities is core to Ashoka's vision.

## ABOUT ASHOKA

Ashoka launched the field of social entrepreneurship in 1980 and today is the largest global association of systems changing social entrepreneurs in the world.

Ashoka believes the most powerful force for change in the world is a new idea in the hands of the right person. Our social entrepreneurs embody these values and continue to forge new paths, transform domains and showcase unexpected ideas to create large-scale social impact.

Leading social entrepreneurs are not heroes working in isolation. Their success depends on creating roles for ordinary people — parents, refugees, computer scientists, farmers, young people — to play an important part in the solution. With each new leading social entrepreneur that we nurture, Ashoka is creating a different kind of future: one where each of us looks inside ourselves and sees a changemaker.

As Ashoka turns 40, we reflect on what it means to be truly successful. For us it means an *'Everyone a changemaker'* world.



## METHODS

### ASHOKA'S APPROACH TO SUPPORTING TOMORROW'S SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

After 40 years of electing the world's leading systems changing social entrepreneurs, Ashoka knows how to find new ideas. For this analysis of our 2019 Fellows, we tapped into the resources of Ashoka's selection process to mine the reports, interview notes, reflections, and writings of our teams across the globe who are expert innovation spotters and who have deeply examined the work of potential Fellows. The learnings, patterns, and insights we cull during the rich Fellow selection process provided the baseline data for this report.

# ASHOKA FELLOW SELECTION PROCESS

The average Fellow candidate will speak to 8 people during their process of election and it can take up to a year to be elected into the Fellowship. The process includes the following steps:

<p><b>1</b></p> <h2>Nominate</h2> <p>Ashoka receives nominations from staff, volunteers, partners, Ashoka Fellows, and nominators, based on the five criteria for Ashoka Fellowship. While Ashoka's primary source for nominations is through our network of volunteer nominators, we also actively search for new ideas in emerging and under-represented fields, and welcome self-nominations from social entrepreneurs who believe they meet Ashoka's criteria.</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <h2>First Opinion</h2> <p>The local Ashoka Venture team reviews the nominations to identify a key social innovation. In order to ensure that the candidate is a good fit for the Ashoka criteria, they conduct site visits and meet with the candidate, and then review their work in-depth with other experts in the field.</p>
<p><b>3</b></p> <h2>Second Opinion</h2> <p>A senior Ashoka representative with extensive experience in the field of social entrepreneurship reviews the work of the candidate with the local Venture team. The Second Opinion interviewer will always come from a different continent than the candidate so they can bring objectivity to the process and assess the potential of the idea to be applied elsewhere. The Second Opinion interviewer will have an in-depth conversation about the innovation in the idea, its potential for sparking sector-wide system change, and the candidate's fit for the Ashoka criteria.</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <h2>Panel</h2> <p>In addition, three to four leading social and business entrepreneurs from the same country/region will interview the candidate. These entrepreneurs can assess the innovation and its potential impact in the local context. The panel then convenes as a group and, facilitated by the Second Opinion interviewer, decides by consensus whether they recommend that the Ashoka board elects this candidate as an Ashoka Fellow.</p>

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## Board Review

Ashoka's Global Board of Directors reviews the candidate's case in light of observations made by the local Venture team, Second Opinion interviewer, and panelists. After assessing the candidate's fit with the criteria and alignment with Ashoka's mission, they make a final decision about whether to select the candidate as an Ashoka Fellow.

# 5 CRITERIA FOR THE ASHOKA FELLOWSHIP

Ashoka's selection process is anchored by our five criteria against which all Fellow candidates are evaluated:

- 1 A NEW IDEA:** Candidates must have a new idea—a new solution or approach to a social problem—that will change the pattern in a field. We evaluate the idea historically and against its contemporaries in the field, looking for innovation and real change potential. Candidates must have a truly transformational innovation, not just a tweak to how things are done currently.
- 2 CREATIVITY:** Successful social entrepreneurs are creative both as goal-setting visionaries and as problem solvers that can engineer their visions into reality. Among the questions we might ask are: Does the candidate have a history of creating other new visions?
- 3 ENTREPRENEURIAL QUALITY:** Successful social entrepreneurs are driven by the vision of solving the problem they are working on. They typically will not rest until their idea is the new pattern for society. At the same time, they are willing to grapple relentlessly with many practical “how to” challenges. A successful candidate, if given the means, would dedicate themselves full time to launching and growing their idea.
- 4 SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE IDEA:** The candidate's new idea has the potential to change the field significantly and will trigger nationwide impact. The idea itself needs to be sufficiently new, practical, and useful for people working in the field to adopt it and turn it into the new norm sector wide.
- 5 ETHICAL FIBER:** Social entrepreneurs introducing major structural changes to society will have to inspire that change at a wide scale and across different stakeholder groups. If the entrepreneur is not trusted, the likelihood of success is significantly reduced. Ashoka insists that every participant in the selection process be assessed for ethical fiber.

Throughout the five stages of our election process, we gather data and information about the Fellow through application forms, field visits, and semi-structured interviews. We see the process as generative; as much as we are seeking to understand the insights and motivations of our Fellows to make systemic and lasting change in their communities, we are also hoping that our questions, frameworks, and perspectives will enable the candidates to feel they are gaining new approaches and networks.

Based on a 2018 study of Ashoka's impact, 93% of 858 Fellows in 74 countries agreed that the Ashoka selection process helped strengthen and articulate their idea.

## POST SELECTION PROCESS ANALYSIS

The materials we gathered from 78 profiles this year were then taken through a qualitative analysis. We generated codes in four categories:

### HOW

the approaches, how-to's and strategies Fellows use.

### WHY

the motivation and insight into why a Fellow founded their organization or began their work.

### WHO

the core constituent groups who Fellows target.

### SECTOR

the field of work or externally recognized sector Fellows operate within.

We ran a network analysis, grouping the codes by type and looking for patterns and intersections across geographies, sectors, approaches and constituencies. The process also allowed us to explore a deeper understanding of each Fellow's unique ability to connect with multiple approaches to work at a systems level.

# NEXT NOW

## Pathways for an Emerging Future

**Next Now is focused on changing the course of history by uniting visionary changemakers around bold goals.**

Together, this ecosystem of leaders will build a brighter future. One that addresses and anticipates the world's most urgent social challenges and one in which no one gets left behind. What comes Next – our most desirable future – must start Now.

Next Now is piloting a new type of collective action around four pressing global challenges: Tech and Humanity, Aging, Gender, and Planet & Climate. Our path to success depends on our ability to:

- 1 Invest in new social innovators shaping each field**
- 2 Set audacious and collective goals with visionary changemakers**
- 3 Team up across sectors to achieve these goals (Teampreneurship)**
- 4 Amplify insights and lessons learned to inform the next set of audacious goals**



## Tech & Humanity

All aspects of our lives are now impacted by technology. Examples of radical breakthroughs of positive change abound – such as personalized learning, health care, micro-loans and the sharing economy. But these same technological advances bring challenges. Unprecedented levels of surveillance are threatening civil rights. Technology embeds bias and discrimination through opaque algorithms. Countless other ethical and moral dilemmas emerge.

Next Now: Tech & Humanity audaciously aims to change the course of history by uniting leaders around goals to develop ethical frameworks that change the policies that govern the public and private sectors.

## Aging

Demographic change will define this century. By 2030, it is estimated that there will be more people over the age of 60 than children younger than 10. This is a phenomenon with deep social and economic implications. The narrative on aging has been largely alarmist and portrays Seniors as burdens on social systems. But the shift also represents a unique opportunity to shape the future of humanity. Insights from the nearly 60 Ashoka Fellows working on aging shows that systems-changing social innovations solutions can radically reimagine aging culture, seniors' contributions to society, and how seniors are cared for.

Guided by these and future insights, Next Now: Aging aims to change the course of history and unite leaders around audacious goals that promote intergenerational harmony, dignity and purpose for all seniors.

## Gender

Gender equity is a moral and a business imperative. Unconscious bias remains prevalent across geographies, and in every venue imaginable—from classrooms to board rooms. Fortunately, some key innovators are identifying the jujitsu points capable of shifting entire systems to address challenges for women and individuals who identify as LGBTQ. Their solutions like combining behavioral design with empowerment, focusing on sectors of strategic importance, and re-framing and deconstructing gender.

Next Now: Gender will unite extraordinary changemakers around audacious goals to build equitable, diverse and accessible societies.

## Planet & Climate

Of the many global challenges we face today, few are as essential to each of us as climate change. While humans have enjoyed the convenience and comfort brought about by the Industrial Revolution, many of us have also lost touch with nature and as a result, directly and indirectly contributed to global warming and climate change.

Next Now: Planet & Climate aims to change the course of history by uniting extraordinary changemakers around audacious goals that bring people and planet to a new equilibrium.

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Shrushti Runwal

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**Ashoka Staff that helped elect Fellows in 2019:**

Abu Musuuza	Hannah Collins	Condurache
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Anika Hagg	Laura Catana	Rainer Hoell
Aya Sabry	Linda Peia	Reina DuFore
Ayendha Kukuh Pangesti	Malini Sekhar	Rajesh Varghese
Barbara Teo Dominguez Nagel	Maria Fonseca	Sanau Narasha
Brittany Koteles	Mariam Tag	Sanjana Janardhanan
Caroline Garrett	Marie Bourdin	Sarais Tineo
Casilda Heraso	Marie Lefebvre	Saurav Roy
Clara Bräuer	Mark Cheng	Shantanu Paul
Danica Straith	Martyna Markiewicz	Shrushti Runwal
Dian Anderson	Martyna Rubinowska	Simon Stumpf
Elena Arene	Maurielle Stewart	Sinee Chakthranout
Elena Gibson	Merve Nur Okutan	Suzie Agustin
Emilie Pelletier	Michael Zakaras	Sybil Caballero
Enrica Cornaglia	Mirella Domenich	Tatiana Cary
Erlijn Sie	Nadia Goncalves	Terri Jayme
Florentine Roth	Nanako Watanabe	Todd Pavel
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Haerim Yun	Ndeye Binta Houma	Varistha Nakornthap
	Ovidiu Hristu	Yannick Fischer

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Bill Kelly	Jack Edwards	Schmidt Sunil Abraham
Chris Cusano	Janet Visick	Valeria Budinich
Danielle Goldstone	Lucy Perkins	Vishnu Swaminathan

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*We also appreciate the countless local experts and panelists who provide critical feedback during selection panels worldwide.*



# Fellows Elected in 2019



 INDICATES A FELLOW FEATURED IN THIS REPORT

## AFRICA

### FEMI KAYODE

Vetsark / Nigeria

Femi is saving livestock in Nigeria through an innovative tracking system that maps the location of animals and widespread diseases. Farmers and veterinarians using this application can collaborate to predict outbreaks before they happen, and when an endangered area is detected vaccines can quickly be distributed to protect animals and people.

### ISAYA YUNGE

Somaapp / Tanzania

Isaya is making higher education accessible to underprivileged African students by opening new funding resources and breaking the myth that advanced education is only for the wealthy. Using the app he created, students can find scholarships they have a high chance of winning, as well as support tools and resources for writing a quality application.

### MUZALEMA MWANZA

Safe Motherhood Alliance / Zambia

Muzalema is reducing neonatal and maternal mortality in Zambia by positioning Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs)

as the drivers of standardized and quality care at the point of birth. The TBAs become skilled practitioners trained by the Ministry of Health and serve as a bridge between public clinics and mothers.

### NGU MORCHO

YakoMedical Africa / Nigeria

Ngu is transforming the healthcare system in Nigeria to be more accessible, affordable and people-centered by incorporating digital technology to empower patients and other stakeholders. He is convening healthcare services together in one facility, so patients can get the treatments and screenings they need without any delay.

### NNEKA MOBISSON

Mdoc / Nigeria

Nneka is reducing the number of deaths in Nigeria caused by noncommunicable diseases like diabetes and cancer, by connecting doctors and patients together to circulate medical knowledge within rural communities. Through coaching and a shared learning platform, people can learn more about early prevention and how to manage their conditions with lifestyle adjustment.

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**PETER AWIN** 

Cowtribe / Ghana

Using mobile technology to connect on a national scale, Peter is providing rural livestock farmers with in-depth information about animal healthcare and early disease prevention. Veterinarians also get involved by visiting hard-to-reach places to examine livestock. His innovation has significantly reduced animal mortality, which is critical for farmers whose livelihoods depend on their livestock.

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**ARAB WORLD**

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**ACHRAF AOUDI**

IWATCH Organization / Tunisia

Achraf is mobilizing Tunisian citizens, especially young people, to lead a decentralized anti-corruption movement in the country. By providing them with the tools to fight corruption and the autonomy to create their own strategies, Achraf is positioning the citizen sector to become a powerful driving force for greater transparency, governance, and accountability.

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**DAN DRISCOLL** 

The Anou Cooperative / Morocco

In Morocco, market access in the artisan space is controlled by middlemen. Dan is eliminating this exploitative process by creating an artisan-led and owned cooperative model, where he empowers craftsmen with bottom-up solutions such as online sales accessible for illiterate artisans, innovations in the logistical chain, and access to high-quality non-toxic materials.

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**MICHAEL ELNEMAIS FAWZY** 

Hope / Egypt

Michael's comprehensive program "Hope" builds resilience in high-risk, underserved children in Egypt to prevent the development of serious mental health issues later on. He also provides tools and support for children struggling with poor mental health, working directly with parents, teachers, social workers and psychologists.

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**DAJANI RANA**

We Love Reading / Jordan

Dajani's initiative offers a new, practical, cost-efficient, and grassroots approach to foster the love of reading in children. Her ultimate goal is to enable children and youth to think for themselves, to be able to empathize with others, and to peacefully and respectfully communicate their thoughts through reading for pleasure.

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**EUROPE**

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**ALBERTO ALEMANNO** 

The Good Lobby / Belgium

Alberto is empowering citizens in Belgium to advocate for change in public policy. Through the Good Lobby, he trains citizens in key civic and legal skills and matches them with expert volunteers to support the lobbying needs of civil society organizations.

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**ALP TOKER** 

NetBlocks / Turkey

NetBlocks supports citizens and advocacy groups' rights to information by monitoring internet across regions and publishing data on shutdowns and outages to reveal the causes (storms, power cuts, technical issues, blockage by authorities, censorship, etc.). Alp is making it possible for data-driven internet activism to safeguard knowledge access through openinternet.

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**BURAK ARIKAN**

Graph Commons / Turkey

Graph Commons is a collaborative platform for mapping, analyzing and publishing data-networks. Burak is empowering civil society organizations and citizens with user friendly technology to share and make sense of their data in a way that was previously only available to large institutions.

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**CLARA JIMENEZ CRUZ**

Maldita / Spain

Clara is fighting "fake news" by harnessing citizens' desires to combat misinformation. Her platform provides citizens with accessible channels to flag suspicious stories, and then circulates the fact-checked versions in easy-to-read formats.

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**ELENA CALISTRU**

Funky Citizens / Romania

Elena is using technology, social media and non-formal education to build a citizens' movement that strengthens Romanians' participation in public life. People "train their civic muscles" by participating in a variety of civic activities, from monitoring elections to reviewing public budgets, while younger generations are educated about democracy through age appropriate tools.

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**EMMANUEL VINCENT** 

Science Feedback / France

Emmanuel is tackling online misinformation about scientific issues. His platform flags questionable content, shares it with his network of strictly selected scientific experts, and compiles a range of reviews into one final veracity rating. He then works with major digital platforms such as Facebook and Google, helping them limit the viral spread of false claims.

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**JENNIFER LEXMOND** 

EasyPeasy / United Kingdom

Jan's platform, EasyPeasy, sends inspiration for developmental play straight to the mobile phones of parents with young children. These games develop key school-readiness skills, helping bridge the socio-economic achievement gap sparked by discrepancies in early childhood development.

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**KRISTINA LUNZ** 

Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy / Germany

Kristina's "Think and Do Tank" is focused on making foreign policy more feminist, transparent, and intersectional. It aims to look beyond the traditional foreign policy approach, mainly focused on military force, to include the viewpoints of the most marginalized groups. The research created by the Think and Do Tank then serves as the basis for informed advocacy.

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## MARIE MADELEINE GIANNI

BET SHE CAN Foundation / Italy

Marie is dismantling gender stereotype barriers and changing girls' perceptions of career opportunities available to them. In her trainings she works with both pre-teen girls and teenage boys as role models to spread this message, helping girls realize their limitless potential while providing them with tools to develop skills critical for flourishing in any career of their choice.

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## MINE EKINCI

Rural Schools Transformation Network / Turkey

Mine is training young teachers in rural communities in Turkey, prioritizing socio-emotional and cognitive skills in learning and best practices specific to rural settings. Her program is the first holistic education movement in rural Turkey, aiming to not only improve the education but also the overall life quality in smaller villages.

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## RAMON ROCA

Guifi.net / Spain

Ramon is bringing internet access to isolated areas by offering community owned and operated networks where each user co-owns and co-manages the infrastructure. This alternative to privately-owned networks drives costs down and helps spur economic development in these regions.

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## RICARDO MARTINO

Unidad Hospitalaria de Cuidados Paliativos para Niños en el Hospital Niño Jesús / Spain

Ricardo has designed and implemented the first pediatric palliative care system in Spain. His model helps children enjoy the best possible quality of life, focusing on staying at home with family instead of being hospitalized.

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## ROSA ALMIRALL

Transit / Spain

Rosa is pioneering a new approach to the way transgender people receive medical treatment in Spain, advocating for transgender identities to no longer be viewed as mental illnesses. Her organization also offers treatment, advice and counselling both online and by phone.

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## SIMONA SINESI

Never Give Up / Italy

Simona and her sister co-founded Never Give Up to support people struggling with eating disorders, destigmatizing an issue buried in Italian society. Focusing on teenagers and young adults since they are most at risk, Never Give Up helps them overcome issues around weight, food and body image while making it easier and more socially acceptable to seek treatment.

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## STEFFI BIESTER

Kickfair / Germany

Steffi is combating the socioeconomic divides in Germany's education system through a street football program in which students engage with others across racial and cultural lines. Her educational model is grounded in socially responsible behavior, and she works closely with schools to ensure that these norms are adapted into their curricula.

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## SUE RIDDLESTONE

Bioregional / United Kingdom

Sue has been a major national and global influencer in the sustainability movement for a quarter century. Her One Planet Living guidelines, which were key in developing the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, provide individuals and institutions with actionable ways to reduce environmental impact on the planet.

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# LATIN AMERICA

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## ABEL CRUZ

Movimiento Peruanos Sin Agua / Peru

Abel is solving the drastic water-shortage problem in the Andean region by designing an integral system of fog water collection, desalination and groundwater collection technology in extreme drought areas. Able is not only providing water for human and animal consumption, but also transforming desert areas into farming lands by enabling communities to take responsibility in their own hands.

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## ARTURO HERNÁNDEZ ORTEGA

Los Supercívicos / Mexico

Los Supercívicos is creating a movement of active, engaged citizens in Mexican society and more accountable governments by making civic participation easier and more accessible using humor and technology.

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## CAROLINA CONTRERAS

MissRizos / Dominican Republic

Carolina is working to end discrimination against the curly hair characteristic of Afro-descendant populations in regions where it's severely condemned. Through workshops, social media and an all-curly hair salon, she is teaching women and girls to celebrate their black beauty and equipping them with the confidence and knowledge to respond to discriminatory actions.

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## CLAUDIA THOMAS RICHE

NCEH – CIEH / Haiti

Claudia is creating a network of nurses in Haiti and providing them with the confidence, skills, and knowledge to promote behavior that keeps people healthier and prevents disease within medical clinics and in communities at large.

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## GERMANA SOARES

União das Mães de Anjos / Brazil

Germana has spearheaded a movement to guarantee access to healthcare and education for children with Zika Virus Congenital Syndrome. She has created a community-based advocacy network, through which parents can raise awareness and share information about ensuring access to benefits.

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## JOÃO SOUZA

Fa.Vela / Brazil

João is pioneering an adult education model in Brazil's favelas that helps residents restore their self-confidence, creativity, and socio-emotional skills. His course—adapted to an audience with low levels of formal education—empowers residents to become more active in their communities, from engaging in civic processes to launching their own businesses.

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## JULIANA GUTIERREZ

Low Carbon City / Colombia

Juliana is reducing urban carbon emissions in Colombia by educating and mobilizing citizen activists, as well as giving tools to companies and local governments for lowering their carbon footprints. She has developed six different solutions targeted to different stakeholders, bringing holistic, participative approaches to the issue.

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## MARCELO ROCHA

A Banca / Brazil

Marcelo is helping economically develop and socially integrate the isolated communities of Brazil's favelas. His organization transmits cultural products of the favelas, such as music and art, to wider audiences. It also works to raise and distribute seed funding to initiatives run inside favelas.

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## MAURICIO PARILLI

Aprendo y Emprendo / Venezuela

Mauricio is promoting a new generation of entrepreneurs by empowering young people in Venezuela and advocating for the legal sanctity of businesses run by youth under 18. He has created a network of young entrepreneurs in Venezuela, enabling youth-driven sustainable social innovation models to thrive.

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## MAURO ANTONIO VARGASURÍAS

GENDES / Mexico

Mauro is inspiring a cultural shift towards gender equity and the inclusion of gender perspectives by engaging Mexico's municipal, state and federal government. By positioning men as protagonists of this movement, he is challenging traditional machistai deals in favor of creating a safer and more equal society.

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## PABLO LECUONA

Tiflonexos / Argentina

Pablo has created a global community of visually impaired readers who are exercising their leadership to replace the paradigm from dependency to autonomy. Through Tiflonexos, a virtual library of more than 9,000 users from different parts of the world, he is advocating for new legislation based on empowerment of visually impaired people.

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## VINCENT LAGACÉ

Nuup / Mexico

Vincent is working with multi-level stakeholders to transform Mexico's systems for producing and distributing agricultural products. Nuup is improving the livelihoods of smallholder producers by involving them, organizations that serve them, and the corporations that buy their produce in a shared effort to design better, fairer value chains.

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## NORTH AMERICA

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### ADAM FOSS

Prosecutor Impact / United States

Adam is addressing the US's mass incarceration crisis by leveraging the influential role prosecutors play in the criminal justice system. His organization provides intensive training for new prosecutors that encourages empathy and spreads awareness of the potentially devastating consequences a ruling can have on families and communities. The ultimate goal is to lower incarceration rates through cultural knowledge change.

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### ALISON LINGANE

Project Equity / United States

Alison is combatting the wealth gap in America by encouraging small businesses to adopt a more equitable business model by becoming employee-owned companies. Project Equity works directly with owners and employees to facilitate this transition, which grows community wealth and is linked to lower turnover rates, creation of local jobs and higher job satisfaction.

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### BRETT MATTHEWS

My Oral Village / Canada

Brett is pioneering the science and design of 'Oral Information Management' bridges to the digital world, which enables illiterate or innumerate adults to safely and independently use modern financial instruments such as mobile wallets, account statements and enterprise records. Using tools like digital images of cash notes and oral iconography, he is making financial inclusion possible for 'oral' adults.

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### GEORGE MCGRAW

DigDeep / United States

Two million Americans are living in homes without clean drinking water or indoor sanitation systems, but there is little awareness of this issue and therefore limited support. Through DigDeep, George is working with these marginalized communities and the water services sector to spark innovation that will build infrastructure to access water and sanitation in an open, participatory way.

---

### JEFFREY CYR

Raven Indigenous Capital Partners / Canada

Jeff is fostering impact investment in Indigenous populations in Canada through a fund management firm, a research and development incubator, and an education arm rooted in Indigenous epistemologies. Additionally, he has stewarded the development of new tools that allows the Federal government to "purchase" social outcomes produced by Indigenous-led social enterprises to pay back the original investors.

---

### JESSICA SCHREIBER

FABSCRAP / United States

Jessica launched FABSCRAP to keep textile waste out of landfills, in response to the alarming environmental cost of the fashion industry. By building relationships with leading apparel brands, she is able to recover textile waste at scale for reuse or recycling, while also influencing decision-makers in the apparel industry to shift towards more sustainable practices.

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**KRISTINA SAFFRAN** 

Project HEAL / United States

Project HEAL aims to radically improve access to care for people suffering from eating disorders, especially those who aren't reached by current options. Through its peer support network and work with insurance companies to promote mental health parity, Kristina is eliminating barriers to seeking treatment.

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**LAURA WILSON PHELAN** 

Kindred / United States

By building authentic relationships between diverse groups of parents through structured dialogues about their backgrounds, race and equity, and goals for their children, Laura has developed a proven model that allows school communities to embrace the goal of "collective wellbeing," champion equity, and change children's life outcomes far into the future.

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**MICHELLE MILLER** 

Coworker.org / United States

Concerned by the rising inequality and poor conditions for workers, Michelle co-founded Coworker.org to give them a powerful voice. They help individuals and groups of employees launch, join and win campaigns to improve their jobs and workplaces. The goal is to reduce inequality in the workplace by having a more democratic communications platform.

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**NINA SIMON** 

OF/BY/FOR ALL / United States

Public institutions such as museums and libraries are struggling to remain culturally relevant in the rapidly changing social climate. To reconnect people with these civic and cultural centers, Nina is helping them transition from traditional service providers into vibrant community-building platforms powered by the people in their communities.

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**SCOTT STRODE** 

The Phoenix / United States

Scott created a national network, The Phoenix, to support communities of people recovering from alcohol and drug addiction. Meeting at brick-and-mortar gyms, members form meaningful relationships through social and physical activities that help them develop a healthy sense of self-esteem.

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**SHELLY ELVERUM** 

Ikaarvik Project / Canada

Shelly is engaging Inuit youth in a program that weaves together Western science and traditional Inuit knowledge systems to generate more relevant research and knowledge generation in the north of Canada. This empowers Inuit youth to take ownership over data traditionally held outside their communities, and helps reshape Southern perceptions of Arctic Inuit excellence and youth potential.

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**SIXTO CANCEL** 

Think Of US / United States

Sixto is transforming the foster care system by ensuring that young people develop self-reliance before 'aging out' of the system. Without support navigating the transition to adulthood, many of them face poverty and homelessness. Sixto's platform gives them the agency to build their own path toward independence while connecting with caring adult mentors of their choice.

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**SONYA PASSI**

FreeFrom / United States

To free abuse survivors from the financial insecurity that prevents them from leaving abusive relationships, Sonya is working with shelters, support staff and the legal system to reimagine a domestic violence support system that focuses on stability-building instead of only crisis response. The ultimate goal of FreeFrom is to help abuse victims escape harmful situations and put them on track for an independent life.

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**SWAPNA REDDY** 

Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project / United States

Swapna is building a new model of legal representation for asylum seekers facing deportation from the United States. Her online platform connects individuals and families seeking asylum with one another, and then connects clients with remote legal representation. She then monitors these cases to identify the most impactful policy or regulatory changes to advocate for.

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**VANESSA LEBOURDAIS** 

Planet Protector Academy / Canada

Vanessa is tackling the disconnect between climate change and deep-seated consumerist norms by empowering kids to be environmental change agents within their family units. Through joy, humor, storytelling and arts-based play, Vanessa holistically cultivates lasting changemaker identities through the public-school system in partnership with municipalities.

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**WILLIAM JACKSON** 

Village of Wisdom / United States

Will is empowering Black families to help create culturally affirming learning environments for Black students in their children's schools. His toolkits include a measure of a school's cultural responsiveness, a racial equity capacity assessment for schools, and a tool that helps parents codify their child's cultural practices for teachers to incorporate into lesson plans.

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**YESHIMABEIT MILNER** 

Data for Black Lives / United States

Yeshimabeit is bringing experts and organizers together to empower social justice movements to use data to create social change. Her network of over 4,000 changemakers is advocating for changes in public policy, educating people about how algorithms impact their lives, and promoting the accessibility of data, in an effort to shift the power of data science into the hands of marginalized communities.

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## SOUTH ASIA

### ABHINAV AGARWAL

Anahad Foundation / India

Abhinav is helping create a sustainable folk music industry in India. He helps artists own their own production processes, providing economic viability, as well as protecting their legal rights and enabling them to collaborate with one another. He also advocates for the study of folk music and ethnomusicology in local universities.

### AKASH SETHI

Quest Alliance / India

Aakash has developed a youth-centric approach to employability training that is rooted in self-learning for 21st century skills, preparing young people for a fast-changing world in which they will need to acquire multiple different skillsets throughout their careers.

### ALBERT MOLLAH

Access Bangladesh Foundation / Bangladesh

Albert is working to ensure that persons with disabilities are included in all aspects of development planning in Bangladesh. He monitors and tracks the impact of infrastructure projects proposed by development organizations such as the World Bank, identifying gaps in project proposals and resolving them through disability-friendly practices and strategic interventions.

### ANDREW CROSS

Everwell Health Solutions / India

Andrew has built a user-centric model of care that tackles the issue of non-adherence to medicine regime by enabling the entire healthcare value chain (treatment stakeholders such as patients, health professionals, public/private healthcare facilities, and policy makers) to use his technology platform, that unifies emerging healthcare innovations seamlessly to offer patients a supportive environment to ensure adherence.

### AHSAN RONY

Green Savers Association / Bangladesh

Ahsan is creating a culture and industry of urban gardening in Bangladesh. Through various tools such as an open-sourced database on urbangreenscapes, a crowdsourced and collectively-owned greenscape fund, and trainings in schools and communities, he is building a sustainable and inclusive system to counter the rapid decrease of green spaces in Bangladesh.





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### **B.S. NAGESH**

TRRAIN (Trust for Retailers and Retail Associates of India) / India

Working in retail is perceived as a shameful rather than dignified profession in the Indian society. To remedy this, TRRAIN engages with influential retail companies to remove barriers that hinder opportunities for employees, while fostering a culture of respect, inclusion and fairness in the retail sector.

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### **MANU GUPTA**

Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS) / India

SEEDS empowers local communities to proactively prepare for natural disasters such as heat waves, floods and hurricanes, by putting them at the center of all decision-making instead of passively relying on outside aid. Additionally, Manu is influencing national and international governments to craft effective strategies towards mitigation, relief, recovery, and reconstruction.

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### **NAZMA AKHTER**

Awaj Foundation / Bangladesh

Nazma is advocating for the rights of female factory workers in Bangladesh. Her organization offers eight training programs, for both workers and factory management, that teach women to recognize their rights, negotiate to better their working conditions, and improve general life skills such as financial literacy and nutrition management. Nazma also administers medical care and legal aid to individuals involved in workplace disputes.

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### **PAVITRA MOHAN**

Basic Healthcare Services / India

Pavitra is building a network of affordable and decentralized primary healthcare clinics led by professional tribal nurses. The nurse-led clinics drill deep into remote and inaccessible communities to improve their health-seeking behaviors, empowering once-voiceless communities to have a stake in their own wellbeing.

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### **SAMIR BORDOLOI**

SPREAD North East / India

Samir's organization brings together urban youth and rural farmers in the North East Region of India and trains them in low-cost ecological farming techniques. This simultaneously catalyzes the local food economy, attracts youth to the farming profession, and builds a network of indigenous food advocates and entrepreneurs who are bridging the urban-rural divide.

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### **SHAMNAD BASHEER**

Increasing Diversity by Increasing Access (IDIA) / India

Shamnad is building an ecosystem for a new generation of changemakers emerging from poverty or other hardships to become influential leaders in India's legal system. To bring these badly-needed perspectives into the elitist legal system, IDIA recruits outstanding youth from marginalized communities and supports them to pursue careers in law.

## SOUTHEAST ASIA

### BENJAMIN ABADIANO

Pamulaan Center for Indigenous  
People's Education / Philippines

Benjamin is empowering indigenous peoples in the Philippines to become leaders of progress rooted in their culture and heritage. He has established a formal indigenized education system that integrates indigenous knowledge and culture within standard course material, and promotes long-term sustainability and improvement efforts for indigenous communities and cultures.

### DEWIS AKBAR

Lab Komputer Mini (Lab on Bike) / Indonesia

Dewis created a traveling computer lab that delivers basic programming education to disadvantaged communities in rural Indonesia lacking such resources. By visiting these far-flung regions, educators are ensuring that all Indonesians have the chance to flourish as self-learners in the age of digitization.

### DINNY JUSUF

Torajamelo / Indonesia

Dinny is breaking the long-standing pattern of outward migration amongst economically vulnerable Indonesian women by reviving weaving as a reliable source of income. By increasing the socially perceived value of traditional fabric, Dinny enables these women to provide for their families, gaining dignity and economic stability without having to leave their homes.

### REGI WAHYU

HARA / Indonesia

Using the power of blockchain technology, Regi is improving Indonesian farmers' crop yields and incomes by enabling them to access accurate agricultural and market data as well as unlock funding sources like loans. In this "data economy," a wide range of stakeholders work together as stewards of accurate data that is owned by the farmers.

### RYAN GERSAVA

Virtualahan, Inc. / Philippines

Ryan is enabling socially excluded populations (such as persons with disabilities, persons deprived of liberty, former drug dependents and sex workers) to access formal work in the global digital economy. His organization offers virtual digital literacy and life coaching, as well as wellbeing and community building sessions to aid scholars in overcoming the debilitating effects of social and economic exclusion.

### SAZZAD HOSSAIN

SDI Academy / Singapore

Sazzad wants migrant workers to benefit from their time abroad by creating new pathways for migrant workers to have a better quality of life. Through Social Initiative Development Academy (SDI) Sazzad has empowered them in fostering a growth mindset, developing their English skills, and opening doors to professional development opportunities while they're living abroad. In the future the migrant workers can implement these new skills when they go back to their home country or when they transit to a new country.

## EAST ASIA

### DAVID YEUNG

Green Monday / Hong Kong

David is "taking a bite out of" climate change in Greater China and East Asia by promoting plant-based alternatives to meat to Chinese and East Asian customers. In this way he is reducing meat consumption while making consumers more conscious of the environmental impact of their food choices.

### DEAGON YI

Book Village Harry / South Korea

Deagon Yi's citizen-led storytelling and publishing initiative is revitalizing rural towns threatened by depopulation. Using closed schools as a meeting place, he invites ordinary citizens to celebrate their cultures through sharing stories that are later published. This unique approach is reviving communities by creating new cultural voices for the country.

### JIN-KYEONG CHO

Stand Up Against Sex-Trafficking of Minors / South Korea

Jin-Kyeong is changing the Korean legal system's views around sexual exploitation of underage girls. Instead of punishing them for criminal involvement, she is advocating for law reform that would protect and support girls. Her organization intervenes when it identifies a girl at risk, provides legal, medical and psychological support, and assists her with housing, education and employment.

### SCOTT STILES

Fair Employment Agency / Hong Kong

Scott is working to end debt bondage which traps many migrant workers in a cycle of forced labor. To disrupt the migrant domestic worker recruitment system in Asia, Fair Employment has built an ethical recruitment agency and training center model that shift initial fees to the employer instead of the migrant worker. Scott's goal is to make exploitative recruitment unprofitable.

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# Partners

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Generous funding from the following partners made the election and support of Ashoka Fellows possible this year:

All Nippon Airlines (ANA)	F. Victor Rolff Stiftung	Red Bull India
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## PARTNER WITH US

We are always looking for new allies to help us support Ashoka Fellows around the world and advance systems change in emerging fields.

Please contact Sameen Piracha ([spiracha@ashoka.org](mailto:spiracha@ashoka.org)) for more information on how you or your organisation can partner with us to grow the largest global network of systems changing social entrepreneurs.

## DONATE TO ASHOKA'S GLOBAL VENTURE FUND

Ashoka invests in people. The Global Venture Fund is a pool of philanthropic funds from our supporters who understand the power and impact of flexible funding to ensure Ashoka can support Fellows across areas of greatest need. The Fund prioritizes supporting the search and selection of social entrepreneurs in emerging or underrepresented areas of innovation and in underrepresented geographies. Your support will help Ashoka use resources where they are most needed and allow us to find Ashoka Fellows with the most unforeseeable ideas. Please visit [ashoka.org/donate](https://ashoka.org/donate) and indicate **Global Venture Fund** in your donation.

## VOLUNTEER WITH US

Ashoka would not be able to find systems changing social entrepreneurs without the help of volunteers who serve as our eyes and ears around the world. Volunteers who are a part of our global nominator network play a critical role at every stage of an Ashoka Fellows' trajectory. Other volunteers serve on selection panels and play a critical thought leadership role in helping Fellows maximise their scale and impact.

## RECOMMEND A CANDIDATE

Do you know a systems-changing social entrepreneur who could benefit from the financial and network support of the Ashoka Fellowship? Nominate them at [ashoka.org/engage/recommend/fellow](https://ashoka.org/engage/recommend/fellow).

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# Everyone a Changemaker



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