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23
IMPACT
REPORT

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



融幼社



PathFinders

PathFinders ensures some of 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 over 11,000 babies, children and women.

Despite legal protections, every year hundreds of expectant Migrant Domestic Worker (MDW) mothers are unlawfully fired, 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, 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 350,000 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, and providing employers with support to ensure pregnant MDWs maintain job security and access to public services.

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

However, with the number of MDWs employed in HK forecast to rise significantly by 2047 to help care for a rapidly ageing 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 and other key stakeholders to ensure policies are enforced and solutions explored that protect the children and mothers we serve.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND



As we celebrate our 15th Anniversary and emerge from some of the most difficult years in our history, we reflect on our enormous gratitude for your continuous support.

As detailed in the following pages, it simply would not have been possible to achieve the following impact for the mothers and children we serve without our dedicated team and incredible partners:

- **Crisis Intervention:** 693 babies, children and women provided counselling, comfort and care through a total of 246 cases handled.
- **Crisis Prevention:** 65 new Ambassadors professionally trained, bring our total number of Migrant Domestic Workers (MDW) trained as community leaders to 294 Ambassadors.
- **Systemic Change:** We continued to drive the development of recommendations to support employers of a pregnant MDW. To increase empathy and gratitude towards MDW mothers, we further strengthened our #WorkingMomsHK campaign, continued to achieve significant media coverage and mobilise the next generation as agents of change.

An enormous thank you also to all those who kept us going with generous donations, much-needed supplies and messages of encouragement.

As a local, non-government funded organisation that serves a marginalised community, we can only do what we do in collaboration with others. It takes a village to raise a child - thank you for being a part of our village to ensure that together we can protect some of the most vulnerable and unsupported children in our community.

If you'd like to have a coffee with either of us to chat more about our impact in 2023 and/or discuss ways you can get involved to support our mission, please don't hesitate to get in touch. In the meantime, thank you again for your incredible support to date.

Vivien Webb
Board Chair, PathFinders

Catherine Gurtin
Chief Executive Officer, PathFinders

15TH ANNIVERSARY

KEY MILESTONES



Our anniversary brings us to reflect on some of the key milestones we have proudly achieved as a team over the past 15 years.

Kylie Ubergang and Melissa Mowbray-d'Arbela founded PathFinders in 2008 after rescuing four newborn babies and their migrant mothers living in crisis in Chungking Mansions.



'All Children Matter' tagline adopted. Still used today, it demonstrates our commitment in ensuring inclusivity to advance our work and ensure all children - including those born to migrant mothers - have a fair start in life.



Chinese PathFinders logo 融幼社 introduced meaning to to be inclusive and embrace all children, as if they were our children. A key milestone in ensuring we connect and enhance the understanding of MDW maternity rights with the local Chinese-speaking community.



Ambassadors launched to empower MDWs as community leaders, with knowledge, information and skills to expand outreach, amplify our messages and signpost Crisis Intervention services.



Equal Justice 平義社, is established in response to overwhelming demand for legal and policy support for community partners and their beneficiaries.



Employer Survey Report published to show how reliance, lack of knowledge and negative views may lead to the unlawful dismissals of pregnant MDWs seen at PathFinders.



Children at the Heart of Migration published as a thought leadership piece to explore strategies and opportunities for collaboration to work together and ensure all children affected by migration are protected and respected.



08 > 13 > 15 > 17 > 18 > 19 > 19 > 20 > 20 > 21 > 22 > 23 > 23 > 24



Kay McArdle appointed 1st CEO: 5k people helped & 45k reached; 'Hassan Wirajuda Award for Civil Society'; UN ECOSOC status; 249 policy interventions; 5 new programmes; team expanded from 4 to 23; second office; second shelter; multiple law, practice & policy precedents.



Vivien Webb appointed as Board Chair, faithfully serving our team, amidst her busy schedule - for 7 years! We are truly grateful for her generous support, tireless enthusiasm and commitment.



Catherine Gurtin appointed CEO to strengthen crisis prevention programmes and drive the development of solutions to influence systemic change.



Public Opinion Survey Report published unveiling the dilemma, challenges and need for solutions for employers and workers in the event of an MDW pregnancy.



#WorkingMomsHK our first public awareness campaign, is launched. Using the Sunflower as a symbol of hope and resilience, the campaign celebrates all working moms in HK, especially MDW mothers who work away from home to give their children a brighter future.



First Child Ambassador appointment. Professional rugby player Russell Webb accepts this key role to help raise awareness of our work in service to migrant moms and their children.



Over 11,000 babies, children and women supported as we continue to ensure some of the most vulnerable children in HK are protected and respected, and have 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 all our achievements laid out in the following pages of our 2023 Impact Report, but what makes us even more proud is our passionate Team and incredible Board who make all our achievements possible. We can't thank them 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 over the past 15 years.

We'd also like to take this opportunity to welcome Emma Lam, who joined our Board in December 2023. Emma has been a contributor to PathFinders over many years, most recently playing a key and proactive role in the organisation of our 15th Anniversary Fundraising Dinner. With her passion, enthusiasm for our mission, coupled with her exceptional professional and networking skills, Emma is a tremendous and valuable addition to our Board. We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Board for their unwavering support and dedication. Their passion and commitment have made all the difference, enabling us to continue to deliver on our mission.



Vivien Webb
Board Chair

Beth Wright

David Spencer

Meena Datwani

Dr. George Lam

Virginia Devereux Wong

Emma Lam

OUR DONORS

Beyond our team, it is our donors, who believe in our work and back us wholeheartedly, that make everything we do possible.

Without their generosity and investment we would have no staff, no community centre, no strategy and no means to deliver our services or programmes.

Thank you for all that you do to support us, for your trust and your partnership in bringing our plans and ambitions to life. To those who fundraised for us, a special thank-you on behalf of the thousands of vulnerable mothers and their unsupported babies that we serve.

Whilst it's not possible to acknowledge here every donor who supported us during 2023, we would like to recognise and say a special thank you to the following organisations who made significant contributions.



The Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong



ALLEN & OVERY



Rusy and Purviz Shroff Charitable Foundation



EVERSHEDS SUTHERLAND



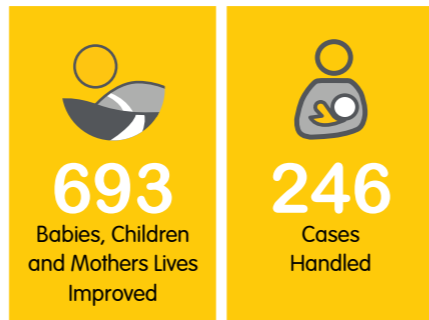
Goldman Sachs Gives



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 policies and solutions exist to protect pregnant MDWs and their children.

10 CRISIS INTERVENTION

In 2023 we provided counselling, comfort and care to **693 babies, children and women** through a total of **246 cases handled**. We received a total of **410 enquiries** via our hotline and WhatsApp. In 223 cases we were able to handle these at an enquiry level only. However, we needed to open **187 new cases** to receive dedicated care and support from one of our case workers, representing an average intake of **16 new cases every month**.



18 CRISIS PREVENTION

We professionally trained **65 new Ambassadors**, bringing our total number of MDWs trained as community leaders to **294 Ambassadors**. In 2023, we **engaged 74,195 MDWs** representing a **78% increase YOY** (year-on-year), of which 48% (35,885) were engaged by 62 Ambassadors. We continued to provide support and advice to MDW employers via our hotline and education portal.



28 SYSTEMIC CHANGE

We continued to drive the development of recommendations to support employers of a pregnant MDW. To increase empathy and gratitude towards MDW mothers, we further strengthened our #WorkingMomsHK campaign and continued to achieve media coverage. We mobilise the next generation as agents of change, and set aside resources to engage with organisations interested in partnering with us to take action.



Vision
All children receive a fair start in life

Mission
Ensure some 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

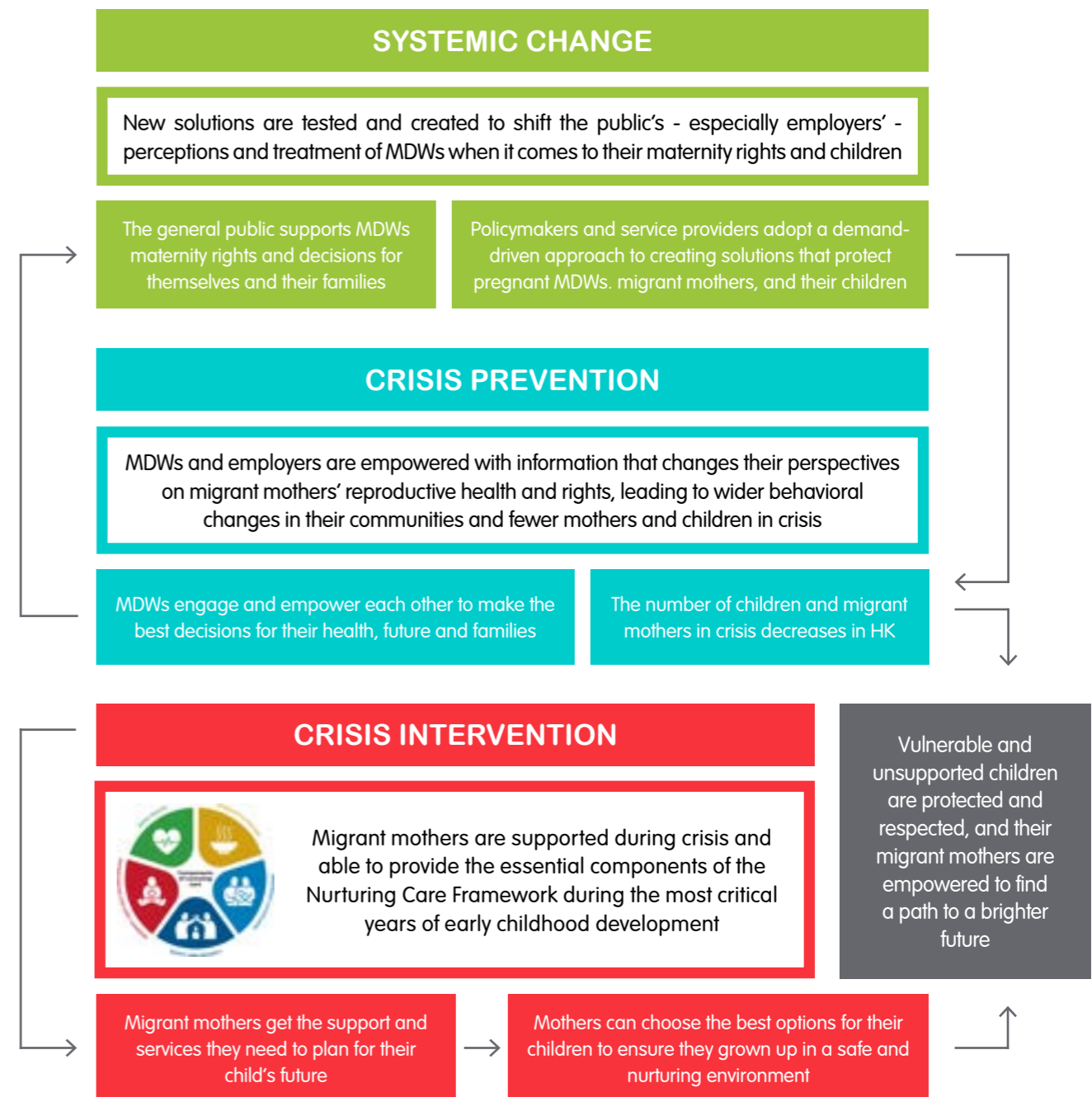
Empowering

Caring

Collaborative

Accountable

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE



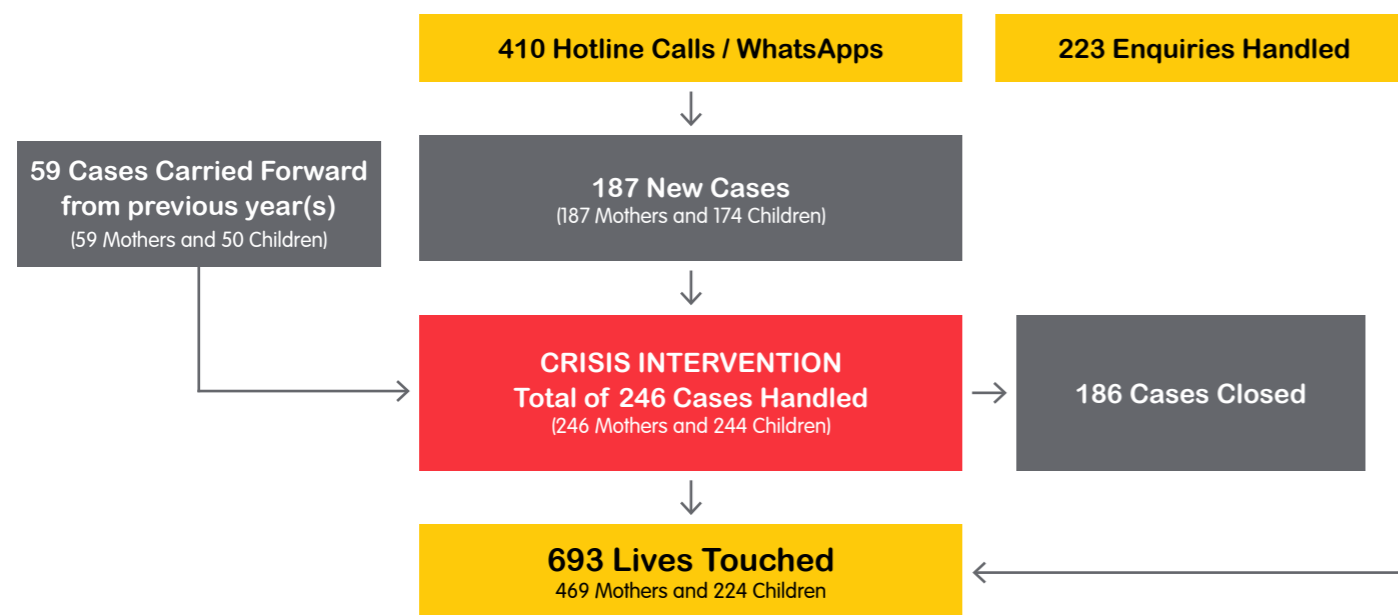
CRISIS INTERVENTION

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

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

In the coming years, as more MDWs come to HK to support our ageing population, we anticipate needing to assist more unplanned pregnancies with **CRISIS INTERVENTION** services, unless we leverage information and strategies in **CRISIS PREVENTION** and **SYSTEMIC CHANGE**.

As we are already starting to witness, our ambition is to see less cases falling into crisis and requiring the assistance of one of our dedicated case workers, while providing increased support at a hotline enquiry level and before a case reaches a point of crisis.



In 2023 we provided counselling, comfort and care to 693 babies, children and women through a total of 246 cases handled, including those carried forward from 2022. We received a total of 410 enquiries via our hotline. We handled 223 enquiries at a hotline level and opened 187 new cases to receive dedicated care and support from one of our case workers, representing an average intake of 16 new cases every month. Overall, we experienced a 37% increase YOY in handling enquiries at a hotline level (2022: 162 hotline enquiries) and a 2.7% decrease YOY in the need to open a new case (2022: 185 new cases).

We assisted 55 women and 51 babies with access to healthcare. An increased number of these were considered “non-eligible persons” (NEP) and therefore unable to access public healthcare services. As a result we witnessed a 29% increase in visits to our Health Centre. Emergency shelter continued to be an area of great need, especially during critical moments such as adoption, domestic violence and homelessness. We are now fortunate to have a number of community partners able to offer suitable shelter. As a result closed our own shelter in 2023, to avoid duplication of services and to be able to reallocate precious resources to other key and emerging areas of need, including an increase in demand for our **Home Country Return programme**.

Approximately 50% of PathFinders cases are recognizance paper holders (RPH). This means they have applied for asylum (by filing a non-refoulement claim) to remain in HK.

Although an option, returning home can be a formidable and difficult process for migrant mothers. They are often rejected by their families, ostracised by their communities and face a marginalised and impoverished future when they return with a mixed-race child born out of marriage.

Such factors contribute enormously to a decision to overstay once their visa has expired or to file a non-refoulement claim, with the remote hope their application might be approved. A recognizance paper is not a visa, and does not legalise the stay of the holder in HK nor confer any rights. As a result, RPHs are considered NEPs and can only receive medical care at the discretion of the Health Authority.

Children born to migrant mothers are among the most vulnerable in HK, often living in unstable and unsafe environments that include domestic violence, drug abuse and cramped living spaces.

In late 2022 a policy change was implemented to reject appeals of non-refoulement claims and expedite removal of unsubstantiated claims. This means many of our clients - pregnant or with newborn babies - may face immediate repatriation orders, before they have made the appropriate arrangements for stable housing and to appraise their families back home of their circumstances.

Home Country Return Programme

In 2023 we assisted 60 families to return to their home country, ensuring all children were documented.

To support migrant mothers to return home with confidence we provide classes on reintegration planning, covering topics such as communication with family, overstaying risks and combating stigma.

In addition to delivering classes with community partners, we maintained partnerships with grassroots organisations in home countries to facilitate reintegration, with a focus on vocational training and employment pathways.

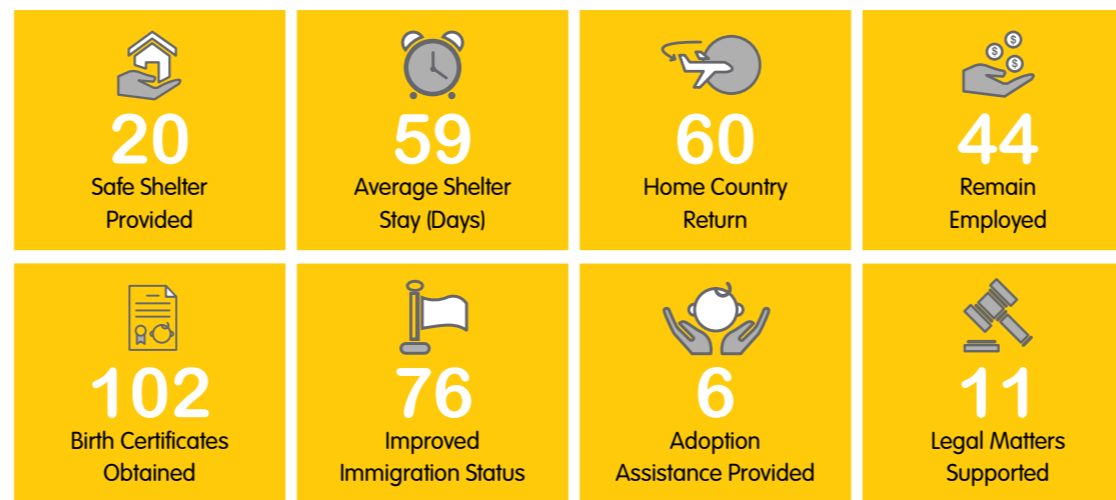


We have aligned our Crisis Intervention services to the Nurturing Care Framework.
 By aligning our services to this international framework, and by seeking to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) we intend to contribute to the global blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.

OUR IMPACT IN 2023

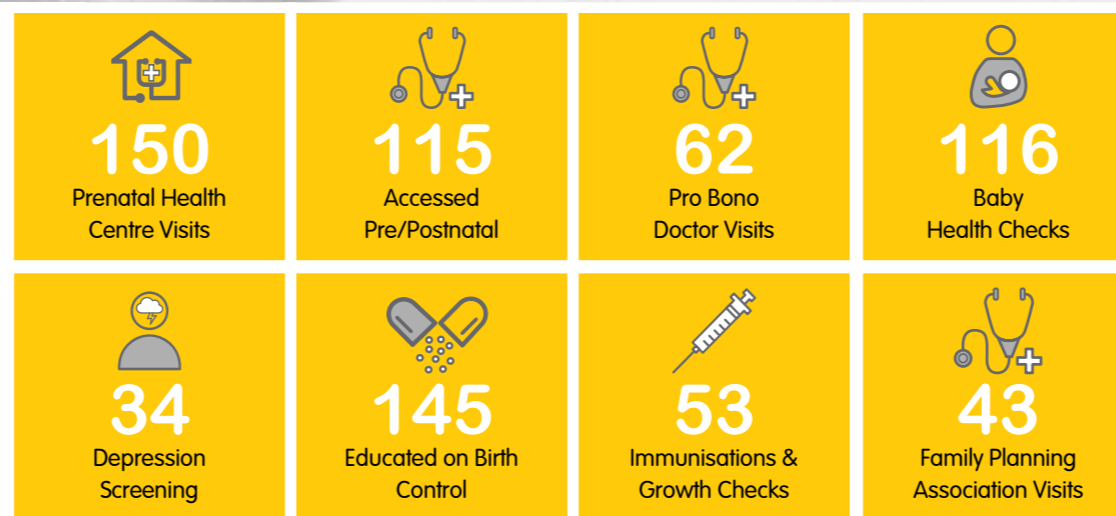
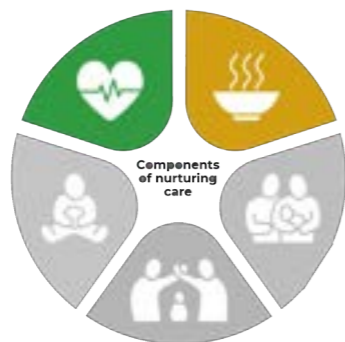
Safety & Security

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



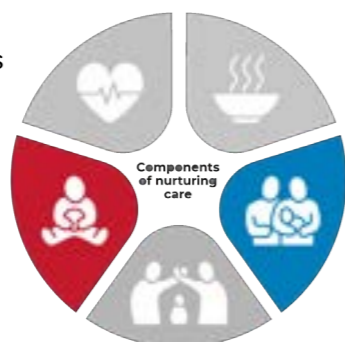
Good Health & Adequate Nutrition

- 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



CRISIS INTERVENTION



Following the death of her husband in 2015, Sarah made the difficult decision to leave her hometown and seek solace elsewhere. She embarked on a journey to HK, where she took up employment as an MDW.

Many years passed and Sarah found herself pregnant with her new partner. Despite facing pressure from him to terminate the pregnancy, Sarah stood firm and refused, leaving her to face her pregnancy alone. As she continued to work, a dispute arose with her employer on the need to attend prenatal check-ups, resulting in premature termination from her employment.

Being pregnant and unemployed, Sarah found herself in a state of uncertainty. Having overstayed her visa, she was scared and overwhelmed about how to surrender to the authorities. It was during this difficult time that Sarah learnt about PathFinders.

PathFinders swiftly collaborated with the Immigration Department and partnered health clinics to ensure Sarah's safe return to Indonesia in time for the birth of her child. At 36 weeks pregnant, Sarah was able to fly home and reunite with her family.

When Anita came to PathFinders she was pregnant having been sexually assaulted by her employer's husband.

She was guided through her pregnancy by a dedicated case worker and our healthcare team, with much individualised care and attention. She was supported by our partners at Equal Justice 平義社 through six inter-related legal cases.

When her healthy baby was born, Anita was empowered through education classes and ongoing individualised support to nurture and care for her newborn. She was also provided with supplies and shelter, while she remained in HK to settle legal proceedings. Despite her traumatic experiences, Anita showered her child with lots of love, care and attention.

Anita and her child have now safely returned home to Indonesia. Her smooth return would not have been possible without the strong support of our partners at SBMI, who provided airport pick ups and ensured important legal documentation was arranged. SBMI was also fundamental in supporting family mediation and continuous monitoring to ensure Anita and her baby settled well after family reunification, who also needed to be carefully guided through the circumstances of Anita's pregnancy and ongoing support needs.



CRISIS INTERVENTION



Former Migrant Domestic Worker Sally approached PathFinders for help when she was pregnant.

Sally found our weekly Education Workshops particularly useful for her to acquire important knowledge related to pregnancy and parenting. More importantly, she felt very motivated to interact with other mothers in the workshop who were faced with similar challenges and get support from them.

To make the workshops more fun and encourage attendance, we give redeemable points to participants who will be able to gain rewards such as essential baby items. Sally has recently accumulated enough points to redeem a brand new baby carrier for her son.



40-year-old Eva came to PathFinders when she was 22 weeks pregnant. It was Eva's first pregnancy – she was carrying twins and there were higher risks with the pregnancy due to her age and the double pregnancy. Her status as a visa overstayer and a lack of support exacerbated her stress and anxiety further. She decided to approach PathFinders for help.

During the first checkup at PathFinders' clinic, our healthcare worker gave multivitamins and general antenatal advice to her, and explained that we would arrange for a blood test and an ultrasound (USG) scan with our pro-bono partner Matilda Hospital.

During a USG scan on 10 May 2023, she was advised to be immediately admitted to the Queen Mary Hospital with a risk of the mother delivering the twins very early. Eva remained in the hospital for two weeks and after discharge, she was advised to continue to carefully monitor her situation as the twins could be born anytime.

Eventually the twin boys were born on 10 July 2023 via an emergency C-section. They were born at 34 weeks weighing 2 kg and 1.9 kg. They had to be kept in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit until their breathing and weight gain were stabilised.

PathFinders continued to provide postnatal support for Eva to ensure she had essential supplies like diapers, clothing, formula milk, nappies and advice on pumping breast milk. In addition, we accompanied her to the birth registry to apply for birth certificates.

Eva's plan is to return to her home country with her twin boys. She was so grateful to PathFinders as we continued to support them and give them hope for a bright future.







CRISIS PREVENTION

Developing a scalable and sustainable outreach and education model

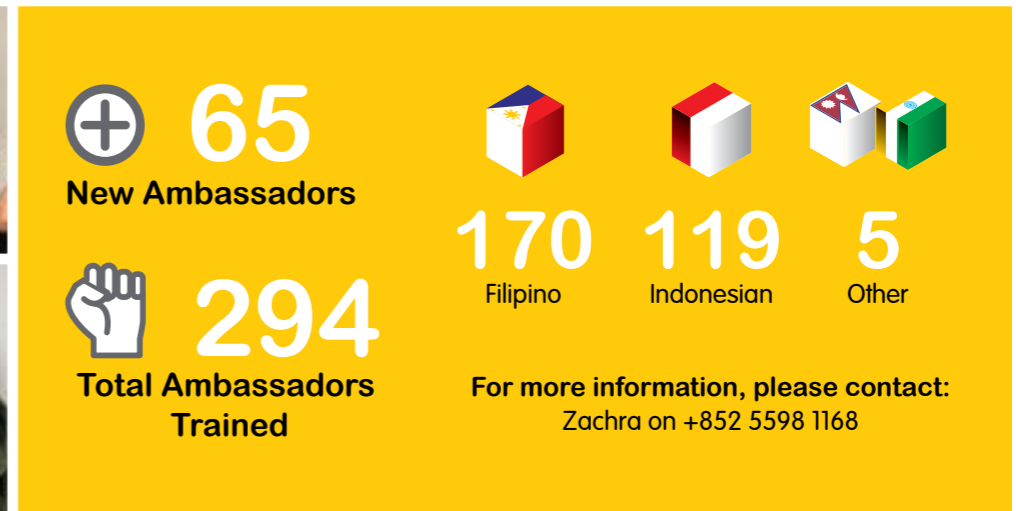
The majority of the 350,000 MDWs currently employed in HK are of childbearing age. Often social and cultural norms in their home countries don't encourage comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education and/or gender equality. This means that many women are not aware of their maternity rights 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** services.



| | | |
|---|---|--|
|  <p>160 Ambassador Outreach Initiatives</p> | <p>Entering its 4th year, this incredible programme has now professionally trained and empowered 294 MDWs as community leaders. They are provided with bespoke training to enable them to professionally deliver PathFinders' messages with confidence, accuracy, confidentially, 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 required to regularly update their PathFinders Manager on sessions conducted, numbers of participants reached and evaluation highlights.</p> <p>Despite all the challenges they may face on a daily basis working and living as an MDW in HK, our incredible Ambassadors demonstrate exceptional resilience and determination to learn and achieve. We are truly amazed by the hard work and selfless dedication of all they do in service to others.</p> <p>In addition to training activities, our curriculum includes non-training activities. These activities encompass annual events, such as Ambassador Reflection Days and the Ambassador Appreciation Day. PathFinders also conducts Special Outreach initiatives and webinars led by our Ambassadors.</p> |  <p>74.2k Total MDWs Engaged</p> |
|  <p>73 Train the Trainer Sessions</p> | |  <p>269 Total Outreach Initiatives</p> |
|  <p>35.9k MDWs Engaged by Ambassadors</p> | |  <p>662 Ambassador Learning & Outreach Hours</p> |







"The Ambassadors' Training Programme has tremendously enhanced my personal growth. I have learned a great deal about MDWs' maternity rights and protection, especially on issues related to love and relationship as well as general discrimination against MDWs' pregnancy that occur in the society."

"We should be aware that all women have the right to get pregnant. We can exercise our maternity rights and are protected by the law. As Ambassadors, we have the responsibility to ensure accurate and practical information is shared within the MDW community."

"I know many fellow MDWs are faced with complex challenges working and living in HK and many have therefore become mentally vulnerable."

"Enhancing my communication and peer counselling skills has enabled me to offer support to those MDWs in need. This is what keeps me motivated and empowered."



"Being an Ambassador has helped me greatly boost my confidence and improve my leadership and communications skills."

"During outreach, I get to connect with fellow MDWs with whom I share information about maternity rights and protection - a topic that may not be easy to talk about, but is an essential part of life."

"Many fellow MDWs are not fully aware of their maternity rights and might look at the issue with judgement and prejudice. There are still a lot of misconceptions about pregnancy and that's why we need to continue to raise more awareness of sexual and reproductive health in the MDW communities."

"I truly hope there will be better understanding in the community of MDWs' maternity rights. I also hope there won't be stigma or discrimination that could cause MDWs who get pregnant to avoid seeking help."



"The Ambassadors' Training taught me how to have an open mind without judgement. At the beginning, it was not easy at all; however, through conducting more outreach, I have started to become increasingly aware of the core messages we can share with the MDWs community, how to engage them, and also how to deal with rejection by fellow MDWs."

"The podcast with Justin and the JCI team to promote sexual and reproductive health was particularly significant for me. Prior to that, I didn't really think much about this topic. Our parents didn't speak about this with us, and it's not a common topic for us to talk about with friends. With the incredible guidance and support by Justin and the team at JCI, I have learned to express my thoughts on the topic of sexual and reproductive health in a very comfortable way."

"MPMC has further increased my knowledge and understanding on this topic. It has allowed me to reflect on what we generally consider taboo, challenges related to religious belief and healthy body perceptions."



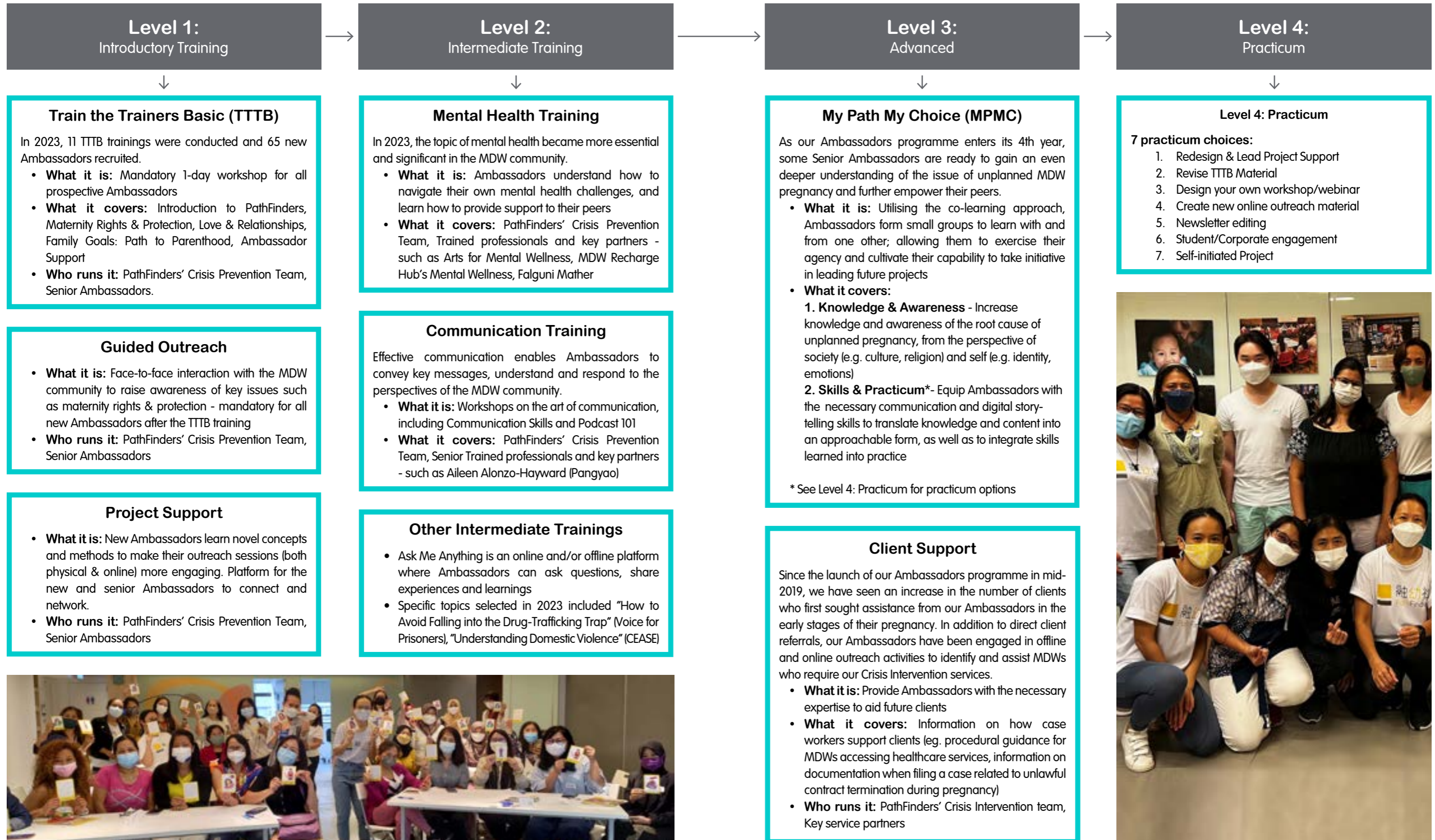
"When I first heard of PathFinders, the thing that came to mind was I would not need this kind of service since I was not planning to get pregnant in HK."

"My journey as an Ambassador has allowed me to help make a real difference in the lives of others. My first encounter with a pregnant MDW who eventually became a PathFinders' client was in 2023. She found out that she was pregnant 15 days after her arrival in Hong Kong and didn't know what to do. I told her not to worry that much and try to speak nicely with her employer and agency. I also advised her to call the PathFinders' hotline where she got immediate assistance."

"My experience as an Ambassador has helped me with my personal growth. I feel so much more confident now knowing that I make a difference in the lives of others. I have also gained a deeper understanding about social issues related to MDWs. In the advanced training sessions, I obtained all the different skill sets such as communication and social interaction, as well as basic understanding about the issues pertaining to social stigma, and overall health and wellness."

CRISIS PREVENTION

Training Curriculum



Following the initial rollout of our Train The Trainers program in 2019, we've further strengthen and built our community leadership support and training.



CRISIS PREVENTION

Supporting employers with information and advice

For as long as employers are unable to maintain their household needs while their MDW is on maternity leave (ML), pregnant MDWs remain at risk of being fired or pressured to resign. In addition to seeking Systemic Change and the creation of solutions with other stakeholders to assist employers, we provide information, support and advice.

Since 2019, PathFinders has been actively engaging employers - from supporting them with essential information to navigate their next steps when their MDW is pregnant, to seeking their views for viable solutions to manage their household needs during a MDW pregnancy.

In 2023, we started to incorporate recommendations from our Employer Survey Report into our Employer Engagement Strategy for 2024 and beyond. We continued to provide practical advice to employers via our online education portal and helpline, supporting 26 employers who called us for information and advice.

Appreciating a low level of interest from employers in attaining specialist knowledge unless faced with an MDW pregnancy, we continued to explore ways to share information and increase their empathy and understanding in the event of a MDW pregnancy.



In October, we participated in Hong Kong Baptist Church Union's carnival with a "Sunflower" booth to engage more than 200 local employers and members of the public, as well as 500 Indonesian MDWs.

We also continued to share key information via Labour Department's Employers' talk, lunch and learns with corporates, and informative social media posts in partnership with HelperChoice.

As we set out to further understand the unique set of challenges facing an employer if/when their MDW becomes pregnant it is increasingly clear that, despite initial feelings of frustration and confusion, they care for their MDW and want to work together to find a solution. There is simply a critical need for clearer guidance, information and practical support to ensure employers and MDWs know how to handle a pregnancy so their child doesn't fall into a crisis.



For employer resources call +852 5500 4586 or visit www.pathfinders.org.hk/get-help/employer where you will find employer guidebooks, top tips and more.



Did you know?

MDW employers do not need to cover their MDW's pregnancy-related expenses. Through the public healthcare system, MDWs receive free antenatal and postnatal services.

MDW employers can receive reimbursement from the government for 4 weeks of their MDWs' ML Pay. ML pay is 80% of the workers' regular pay.

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Developing evidence-based interventions to drive systemic change

All working women in HK are eligible - 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. With ML she is allowed 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.

Despite legal protections, roughly 50% of our clients experience unlawful contract terminations or coerced resignations every year as a result of pregnancy. This is because they and their employers were under equipped with important legal knowledge, financial resources, and practical solutions to appropriately manage ML. Given limited care options for young children in HK, MDWs have become a critical source of support for many households. HK currently employs 350,000 MDWs - a figure that is predicted to rise significantly to care for the city's rapidly ageing population.

Without solutions that support an employer's ability to provide ML while maintaining their household needs, MDWs remain at risk of becoming unemployed and made homeless. Many are working mothers, financially supporting children left behind, their partners, and extended family. 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.



Employer Survey Report

In 2023 we continued to explore practical and affordable solutions, to support employers in the event of an MDW pregnancy. These were ideated based on research conducted over the previous two years.

Our 2020 public opinion survey showed that while employers find MDW pregnancy unacceptable, they also believe MDWs should be eligible for maternity rights. Yet, our 2022 employer survey report indicates that a vast majority of employers do not know MDWs are eligible for ML and believe it permissible to dismiss a pregnant MDW as she would not be able to perform work duties.



In 2023 we initiated collaborations with potential partners to cocreate and/or enhance effective solutions for priority needs set by the MDW community and their employers. This started with developing action-oriented strategies to engage target stakeholders in ideating solutions we can test and bring to the market.

In 2024, we will coordinate sharing key learnings with policymakers and key stakeholders to promote transparency, ensure implementation, and wider systemic change.

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.



SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Respecting MDWs as mothers & strengthening protections for their children

Often under recognised, MDWs make a significant economic and social contribution to HK. Representing 10% of the labour force, hiring an MDW enables many thousands of women to be included in the workforce. Recent research from HK Baptist University suggests participation of mothers in the workforce increases from 49% to 78% when an MDW was employed.

Since 2021, our #WorkingMomsHK public awareness campaign has been seeking to increase understanding, acceptance and support for an MDW pregnancy, and respect for MDWs as moms. Through this campaign we want to collectively lay societal foundations that build a culture of appreciation and respect for the vital social and economic contribution of MDWs.

We continued our efforts to celebrate all working moms in HK, especially MDWs, with the added emphasis of advocating for stronger protections for their children. Together with Hong Kong University, we launched the "Children at the Heart of Migration" report. A panel discussion was held to ignite conversations and spark collaboration to strengthen support for MDW moms, so they could in turn adequately support their children.

We had the privilege of hosting acclaimed photographer Xyza Cruz Bacani for a week in May, during which she engaged diverse stakeholders at various events with her story - a familiar one to millions of children worldwide whose childhoods are disrupted by the migration of one or both parents. Through compelling photographs and powerful storytelling, Xyza was able to reach the hearts and minds of her audience as a child deeply impacted by her mom's migration.



Monday is MomDay at PathFinders!

MomDay is a weekly column on Pathfinders' social media pages. It celebrates the strength of working moms from all walks of life in HK; especially MDW moms.



Sheryl was one of the MDW moms we supported from 2022 to 2023. We helped this positive and strong mom navigate employment issues throughout her pregnancy, and assisted her with home return arrangements, documentation when her daughter Jazleen was born. Sheryl and Jazleen are now reunited with their family in the Philippines.



We were honoured to celebrate Qualee, mom of Aileen, co-founder of Pangyao and friend of PathFinders. Qualee was one of HK's first MDWs from the Philippines in the 1970s. Her remarkable story not only inspires - it helps us understand the changes in immigration laws over the years for children born to migrant parents in HK.

We welcome MomDay stories from working moms from all walks of life! We would especially love to hear from children and young people sharing about their superhero working mom and/or special MDW Aunty. Email info@pathfinders.org.hk to nominate yourself or a working mom you know.

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

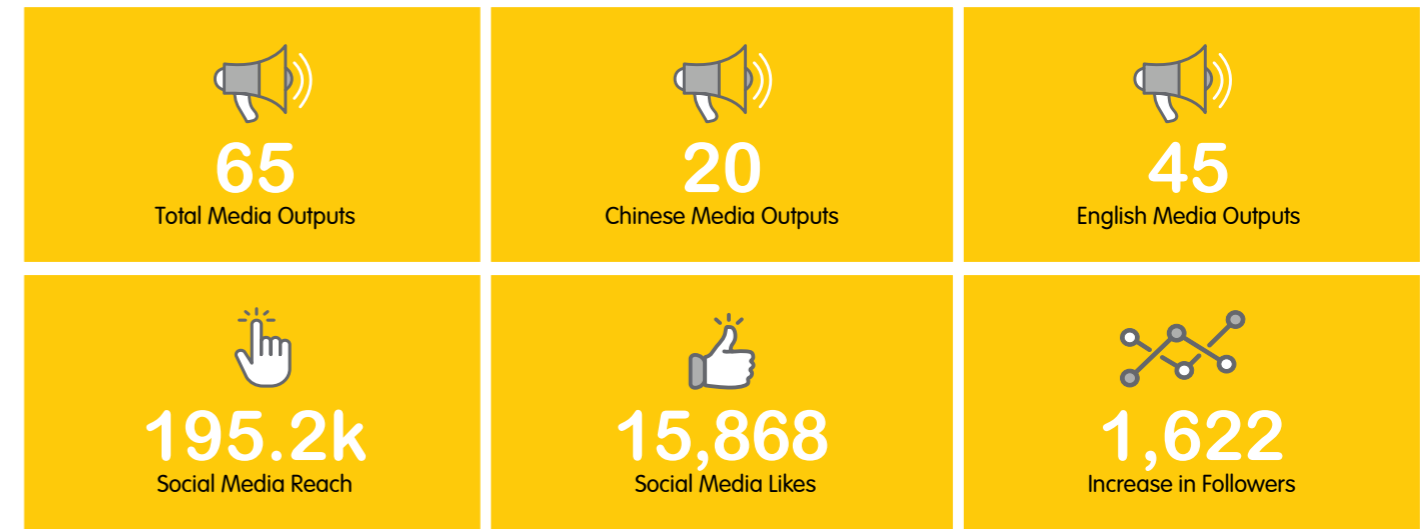
Leveraging our 15th anniversary milestone, we continued to drive public awareness about MDWs' maternity rights and protection through publicity.

A remarkable amount of media coverage was driven by our Mother's Day exhibition with Xyza Bacani in May, as well as the launch of Children at the Heart of Migration report. Featuring Xyza's firsthand sharing, we hoped to enable the public to better understand the experiences growing up as a left-behind child.

We also engaged with the media to feature our Child Ambassador Russell Webb's heart-warming sharing to celebrate Children's Day and our anniversary.

In addition, we continued to reinforce thought leadership through opinion pieces in light of key moments throughout the year, including International Women's Day, Mother's Day and World Children's Day.

Our social media presence remained active throughout the year with various stories to spread awareness. Our incredible Ambassadors, interns and staff were invited to share their inspiring stories as a way to enhance the public's understanding, care and support for MDWs in the community. This is a mission very close to our hearts!



SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Mobilising the next generation as Pioneers

We're on a mission to ensure all children have a fair start. This starts with our next generation - future leaders, influencers, MDW employers - who believe in a kinder, more equitable world. We view children and young people as our Pioneers who pave the way for sustainable, systemic change.

Besides shaping HK's future, the next generation can influence and shift the mindsets of present and past generations. Children and young people have been leading conversations with parents and peers, on media platforms - voicing out their appreciation towards MDWs; and the injustice, hardships faced by many pregnant MDWs in HK. Intentional about Investing in our next generation, we were thrilled in 2023 to increase our engagement with individual students, year groups and entire schools.



Year on year, we experienced a 95% increase in the number of activities with youths and engaged 21% more young people. Over the coming years we envision Pioneers will evolve into a leadership programme, offering more enriching experience for children and young people in the years to come. We will facilitate children's ability to **LEARN, SERVE & PARTICIPATE** and **ADVOCATE** in different ways, depending on their age group:

Children (6-12 years old)

- Learn**
- Pioneer Packs
 - Assembly talks
- Serve & Participate**
- Fundraisers
- Advocate**
- Contribute stories to our social column MomDay
 - Submit letter to South China Morning Post (SCMP)

Youth (13-17 years old)

- Learn**
- Assembly talks
 - Movie screening
 - Workshops
- Serve & Participate**
- Fundraisers
 - School fairs & events
 - Organise and pack supplies for clients
 - Contribute stories to our social column MomDay

Young Adults (18-24 years old)

- Learn, Serve & Participate, Advocate**
- Internship programme
 - Special outreach events with PathFinders' Ambassadors
 - Contribute stories to PathFinders' social media column MomDay
 - Movie screening

We are so grateful to the following schools for taking actions in many different ways to raise awareness, collect supplies and/or funds to support our work:



HKUST Connect

For the first time, in 2023, we engaged University students to reach out to the MDW community with our Ambassadors. We worked with HKUST Connect to engage 14 students for the outreach.



West Island School

We were delighted when 5 students set up our first PathFinders' school group! This team dedicated their time and passion to share our work and the importance of the MDW community with their peers. They had a bit of fun(draising) too by hosting a 'dunk-the-teacher' activity!



Kellett School

Kindly gifted "The Helper Documentary" by filmmaker, Joanna Bowers, we had an inspirational screening and interactive session with the wonderful students. Over 300 staff and students joined us to understand how they can take action to increase respect and appreciation for the MDWs community.



Our First Child Ambassador

In 2023 we were delighted to appoint our first Child Ambassador - Russell Webb - a Hong Kong Rugby Sevens professional player. Like many children growing up in HK, Russell's passion for our work is very much fuelled by his special relationship with his MDW Aunties Blandy and Charit; as well as his motivation to give back - especially to the next generation. Russell is a superstar on and off the pitch, making him the perfect choice for this PathFinders' first!

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Strategic Partnerships are Key to Reaching our Goal

We rely on many stakeholders to achieve our long term goals for children born to migrant mothers. Our partnerships are designed to benefit the community of women and babies that we serve, as well as to provide partners with the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to society. With our principle of accountability, we hold regular post-project visits to our Community Center and hosted over 110 partners and supporters in April 2023 to share about our impact in the community - enabling them to have more clarity about their contribution.

With our newly developed partnership mapping and engagement plan, we acquired 55% partners and achieved 155% direct engagement with the public compared to our target for the year. We partnered with them through public awareness campaigns, Lunch and Learns, movie screenings, supplies drive, research collaborations, post project visits, and various volunteer opportunities. We educated different corporate employees and members of community groups about the unique needs of migrant mothers and babies and inspired them to take action as both socially conscious citizens and as employers of MDWs. In total, we worked with 124 partners - reaching 29 funding partners, 36 service partners, 24 in-kind partners, and 35 campaign/media partners.

Hear from some of our donors and learn why people are supporting us:

"We were delighted to visit the PathFinders Center and to see first hand the services you provide for migrant moms and babies. Taking part in the bone density examination on the day of the visit made our visit all the more meaningful. We recognize how meaningful PathFinders' service is to these moms and babies."

Jessica Zhang. Citic CSLA during an end of project visit to PathFinders Community Center

"With my wife giving birth to our second daughter in a couple months, we know how expensive maternity supplies are, especially for the salaries of domestic workers. I knew this would also resonate with so many of our colleagues who are very dependent on MDWs in their families' lives, and they were indeed very willing to help. We are glad we had the chance to be aware of the drive through the HandsOn calendar and in turn be able to deliver some support to your wonderful organisation, Pathfinders!"

Alan Song. A supplies drive volunteer



124

Partnership Initiatives



1527

Public Directly Engaged



170

PF Champions Engaged



We are also grateful to many other companies and community groups that partnered with us to provide much needed funds, supplies and Community Centre support.



EVERSHEDS SUTHERLAND

One of our strategic partnerships last year was with Eversheds Sutherland. We worked with them on a number of activities that cut across our CI, CP, and SC programs - a Lunch and Learn participated by 15 employees, a Maternity Pack Drive to create 20 maternity packs, an education talk for ambassadors on early breast cancer detection, and a sponsorship at our anniversary gala. The depth of our engagement with them enabled them to understand our work better, and gave us the much needed encouragement to press on towards our goal.

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.

SERVICE PARTNERS



COMMUNITY 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.

Schools:

Engage your students as PathFinders Pioneers and agents of change with specially designed materials and bespoke learning activities.

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.

All
Children
Matter

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