THE WORLD BEYOND COVID-19
Community Responsiveness

Meeting Date:	July 11
Meeting Time:	2:09 pm
Meeting Location:	Zoom
Meeting Facilitator:	CEED Concordia, The Refugee Center, Sustainable Concordia
Attendees #:	
Notetaker:	Josie Fomé

Moderator (Intro/Knowledge Shared)
Duha:

Discussion: (Items/Knowledge Shared)
Question 1: We're going to start with each panelist talking to us about the inspiring social and community initiatives that they have led or engaged with in the communities they are a part of during this pandemic. Stephen Nzishura - FinMango; last three/four months very unpredictable; stats on India...most people in his community are migrant workers...looking to see impact on these workers...when India shut down transportation wasn't provided so the migrants couldn't travel back to their homes - sleeping on Tuktuks and Shaws; many tried to walk home and other means to get home; daily wage is 6cad for a family of up to 7 people -- work he's been doing has been **food provision; org has been raising funds (about 40k usd) with three local orgs providing daily meals on the streets; raising funds to give out dry rations so families could eat for more than one day** Shyam Priah - sustainable approaches for vulnerable communities; brief glance at figures: 32mil pop growth of 1.30; about 170,000 refugees...migrant workers contribute about 20% of the workforce...malaysia amongst top 10% that has managed the virus well but not without constraints -- **Yellow House started a fundraiser to help the initiatives started project SOUP save our under privileges raised about 35,000$ to provide food aid**; had to change structure + delivery; **created a platform on the website where malaysians could be the eyes and ears and nominate WHO needed help**; landscape now based on data that showed where aid was needed, **helped address impact on more individual level**; phase two is providing medicine for non communicable diseases (pre-existing diseases) for refugees, migrant workers, and W40s Laud Anthony Basing - one of the countries driving the numbers in africa due to the number of tourists that came in just before covid really hit; country has managed well by increasing testing over 300,000 testing -- inca foundation contribution; looking at ppl, creating awareness, talking policy, diagnostic work; awareness was working in collaboration with a lot of younger orgs, videos + op eds where discussion is surrounded around the virus in multiple languages, skeptics have made the awareness creation difficult; have been able to contribute to policy; partnered with Food for All Africa and donated food to vulnerable communities...giving one time donations become a problem, need to find a way to increase sustainability; put in **a lot of innovations in various sectors to help the country fight the infections**

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*Key Takeaway(s):

Question 2: COVID-19 has shaken our world and lives as we know it and its impact is disproportionate. Millions have become unemployed, millions depending on an informal day-to-day income have lost that income and millions are left with no social safety nets in place and no access to healthcare. What have been the challenges and impacts faced on a local level in your community/es due to the pandemic, and how has the response been in addressing the challenges and alleviating the economic impacts from a societal level and also in adapting to the changes occurring constantly during this time?

Shyam - the challenges are two fold and depends on the length of lockdown in each country; KL is slowly re-opening border and continuing testing - diff communities are expected differently...top three are the b40, **refugees, and the migrant workers; the last two don't have a safety net because they're more daily earners can't keep food on the table**; in malaysia in the face of adversity everyone comes together...**government and citizens pooled funds and food to help those who needed it**; one of the things realized with the b40s communities, bc they've been exposed to hardships, they've exhibited a type of resilience never seen before having been on the ground -- the other challenge is adjusting to the "new normal," and how ppl are adjusting their daily lives around this new norm...some of the methods are unorthodox...local action is all the more relevant to try to help these communities sustain themselves...intro of a new word in malaysia "pupert"...teach conversational english that have been shifted to online services...**lots of pivoting with lack of access but also a period of learning -- malaysians have been quite generous in providing the necessary resources + network; lots of initiatives introduced at the national level as well**

Stephen - India is a unique situation because of the population size and the insufficient data...400 million migrant workers but many are unregistered; one the methods finmango came up with is a **5 prospect diagnostic 1) assessment** - go in and take objective data (family numbers, what do they do, what's the need, who's still employed, etc.) India is a shame/honor culture, if someone's struggling they're not going to come out and share that...most data is gathered through someone else (subjective data collection) **2) diagnose** - those travelling through the city didn't receive deep assessment...provided masks + dry rations; dealing w/ migrant workers + looking at workers in his city...since it's been a couple of months, people in middle class are now struggling...it's not just poor people...income isn't coming for anyone...Indians value animals but due to the heat many animals are dying - providing food for animals on the streets as well through the Finmango interns "if the humans are not going out to eat, the dogs are also going to be suffering on the streets" **3) coming up with a plan** - getting an advert card...a registration number; been able to serve thousands of families in a short amount of time...PEOPLE WILL PLAY YOU thus the need for the avert card that details if you've received before, how many family members are in your group, etc. **4) implementation** - partnering with local organizations...enlisting...some finmango values = indians helping indians, gives them self confidence bc they see their own people coming to help them in their time of need...small risks when people are denied food but overall positive **5) reassessment phase** - put a pause because India is really struggling...money runs out eventually...how can we be smart with what we have now and be best prepared for the future

*Key Takeaway:

Question 3: The pandemic has increased the need for social innovation and especially in emerging countries. A community of innovators across the world have created various crucial innovations meeting different needs to support the fight against COVID-19, and one of the pressing needs is testing. Laud, you have led a team that won the WHO's COVID19 hackathon with CoviTTRads and also led a team of scientists to develop a rapid testing kit which won Africa.com's Brilliant African Innovations against COVID-19. Can you tell us more about these innovations and How should we think about the role of innovation in the midst of the current global crisis?

Laud: In developing countries, we rely a lot on developed countries for technological innovations, but **one thing covid has brought is local intervention**...**been forced to look within at the entrepreneurial solutions within...Ghana has had an innovation ecosystem for a long time but was lacking governmental support**, for ex: preventive measures: wash hands under running water, but what about communities with no running water at all...veronica buckets..everyone touching the tap and transmitting virus...highschool students working on dispensers dispensing on its own and got the attention of the president; Ghana imports 100% of the ppe but with borders closed, people had to produce facemasks...**hopes once virus reduces, innovations aren't forgotten and going back to relying on foreign imports**

His organization has looked at **1) identification** - how do we identify those who have high risk factors; we have low resources so we can't monitor everywhere...if we can map low, medium, and high risk...we can say where we can put in more measures...monitor minimum risk...quickly close high risk communities and do all the things you are supposed to do so those from medium and low don't come in or out COVERTRACKS - one platform that covers the four diff. aspects multi language; the app asks you a few questions than puts you in the risk group you belong to
2) testing - once you notice the high risk communities, they are rapid test kits that detect the virus itself; developed 2 different kits - rapid test kit is a tube prepared by org, health worker takes a sample, puts in tube, adds some chemicals, and put in anything that can give a 65 degree temperature, the color change makes you know whether you have covid or not, its cost...less than $5; antibody test is the 2 testing detecting the virus in your body, you have the virus you're feeling sick but in that period you can't transmit...can test for virus AND test for transmission
3) tracking - testing people's movements via their mobile phones categorized into green yellow and red, contract tracing if red goes into a community of green
4) dissemination - real time dissemination to all necessary stakeholders

Best thing as a result of covid is government officials noticing and acknowledging resources + innovations in house

*Key Takeaway:

Question 4 - We are in the midst of multiple crises, health, economical, environmental and racial justice crises. This is a turning point, Author and Activist Arundhati Roy said "Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is

no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next." How do you envision the world beyond covid-19 and what are some of the lessons that we can carry moving forward in strengthening community resilience, relationships and preparedness in responding to crisis in the future and in rebuilding a more sustainable and just world? What are the most critical changes that we must make to face the future effectively?

Stephen - When I look at what's happening right now, we have to come together...right now we're **looking from within our communities and I think that's where we have to go**; community that's been feeding the poor for years (seik) even before covid; **the environment is THRIVING**...people can see the Himalayas from India...the pollution is reducing...however you're also seeing a lot of food shortages...environmental tragedies as well though...**what I see is the private and public sector + government coming together**; as we see the social justice movement, we're starting to see who the populations that are mistreated are...revealing the injustices...migrant workers were being called "corona" because they were seen as the ones distributing corona...poverty finances + injustice all go together...it's always the ones we think are weak that suffer the most and we need to ask ourselves how we can do better for them

Shyam - I must say, I agree with Laud. This extreme situation has brought out some bad inequalities against the treatment of the migrant workers...despite the inequalities...malaysia is learning that we've been dependant on the migrant workers more than was realized...the low skill jobs were done by migrant workers and not the government has put in policies saying migrant workers are not allowed to work...we are in a precedented time and we should not be looking at borders...it takes each and everyone of us to try and make things move forwards...**public spaces are being reinvented, we're changing the way we visit public spaces...now is the time to engage the community different depending on their level of vulnerability...lot of knowledge transfer that has to happen**...we may have apps but they don't know how to USE the apps that tell you where to go for services...knowledge transfer and awareness...rethinking and helping adapt to new norm...lots of policy change on the national level...govt has introduced stimulus packages to help bounce the economy but even there the inequality comes into play if everyone doesn't' get what they need...**project SOUP has translated into a huge pool of data by showing who needs immediate help and what kind of help is needed...helped STRUCTURE the aid and sustainability so that everyone gets what they're supposed to get**...trying to get livelihood back...Cater to about 3,000 communities...try to see what skills they have and which organizations need those skills and match the work...teaching beneficiaries to grow their own food as well

Laud - **little bit more pessimistic about whether the world is going to change post covid...Africa's political establishments...the leaders have not learnt any lessons**...what might change is a lot more inward innovation systems...but environmental sustainability and racial changes - our leaders have not learnt any lessons and it will take more...unfortunately our civil societies were also brought down due to covid in a time where they should be speaking out the most...everyone's reeling from the effects of covid...the politicians and leaders who are supposed to strategize are not...many conspiracy theories are being spread...leaders have stood on platforms comparing covid to malaria...lessons have NOT been learnt maybe we'll earn later because covid is just beginning...**once we've not learnt any lessons, we're not going to create any real change**

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Q&A Section

q: are there concrete ways we can encourage all countries to continue innovations in light of wE situations we face? what are some ways we can innovate in an environmentally sustainable way

Shyam: **ignore borders and look at everyone as one big happy family; create a platform to exchange knowledge**...going to ask Laud a lot of questions about apps...but in order for me to bring this understanding to my communities EYE need to understand it first...**the whole world is like a platform and we should share because right now social innovation is what's helping**

Stephen: with everything there's two sides of the coins...coming from the financial world..a lot of people are already at work...laud and shyam are using innovations….a lot of ppl are finding out stuff they didn't know this year...most ppl are saying it's going to get worst but **don't underestimate the power of people opening their eyes and knowledge**...spoke to an afican businessman in europe talking about investing in africa...a lot of people are gaining knowledge right now and looking at numbers and numbers don't lie...**information has caused governments to crumble** 2) 2008 financial crisis...uber, instagram, venmo, squarecatch, slack, some innovations as a result...**when people are hungry, have information, and are fed up...when they actually know, they can't ignore the facts anymore** -- all the apps we use everyday today, all these apps may be obsolete...fives years from now the world will be different

Laud: practical steps to get everyone involved… **1) innovations ecosystems in each community**...give support to young innovators thinking about how to change community for the better and older people providing guidance **2) knowledge sharing**...share knowledge with other ecosystems in other communities...importance of fairs and competitions that brings people from various communities together **3) mentorship**...mentor young people...don't have a lot of direction in how to manage all the information coming their way and it could actually be detrimental (if I'm the only one with a candle, I can only see very far...but if I light someone else's candle..and that continues...eventually I'll see very far)

q: What is the current situation in all the countries (ghana, malaysia, india)

Shyam: when started with the movement Control Order it was quite strict..could be fined….in stages things have slowly opened...essential services (food and healthcare) remained opened but almost collapsed hence the strict measures….borders are still closed except for families returning...most businesses have opened...opening in stages and being very careful...90% of businesses are open and operating

Stephen: number 3 in the world for number of infections...essential businesses are open for a time….been state by state last couple weeks….last night started lockdown...gonna get worse in India don't have capacity for population...one of the states will extend the lockdown rules to 2021

[courtesy of CEED Concordia, The Refugee Centre, & Sustainable Concordia]

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Laud: the borders are closed in Ghana...easing restrictions a bit..businesses are working...churches are open

*Key Takeaway:

Additional Items:
Next Week: Climate Change - Vanessa Nakate, Amr Addas, Jen Gobby, Deborah McGregor (Moderator: Emily Carson-Apstein)

[courtesy of CEED Concordia, The Refugee Centre, & Sustainable Concordia]