Kechara Soup Kitchen is a community action group that distributes food, basic medical aid and counselling to the homeless and urban poor of Malaysia. It aims to provide a permanent soup kitchen building as a place of safety for the distribution of hot food and medical treatment facilities for the homeless. In the long term, Kechara Soup Kitchen’s mission is to reduce the flow of homeless living on the streets by providing a nurture centre building as a place of training and assistance to help make the homeless employable and able to re-enter society.

- Grown from feeding 20 mouths per week in 2006, to feeding over 2,500 hungry mouths every week.
- Provided hundreds homeless clients with medical aid, in both local clinics and hospitals.
- Helped groom over 200 homeless clients to successfully interview for jobs. All are now working happily in their new vocation.
- In May 2012, the Kechara Food Bank was launched, and it engages with the public and private sectors as the dried food collection, management and distribution centre for charitable bodies and families who need it most, regardless of race, religion and culture.
Key Insights

Beneficiaries refuse to accept housing despite living in destitute, possibly due to a fear of the loss of freedom and dignity.

More than one meal serving is taken by the same person who collects them from different locations.

Effectiveness of the organisation is disproportionately dependent on one high-performing person.

Some homeless people refuse medical treatment till conditions reach a serious point.

Identified Question

How might we leverage on trust / relationships to better serve our beneficiaries?
**Proposed Solutions**

- Collaboration with other businesses or medical organisations to renew the Kechara card for medical uses

- Develop volunteers’ commitment through a clearer allocation system

- Streamline internal work processes
Yayasan Chow Kit runs a teenage centre and a children centre located in the Chow Kit area to meet the needs of vulnerable and at-risk inner-city adolescents and young people. With the number of stateless children reaching beyond a total of 50,000 in Malaysia, Yayasan Chow Kit serves to protect the rights of these children and provide them positive and holistic opportunities to enable them to reach their full potential.

- Located in the capital city’s seedy Chow Kit area, KL Krash Pad serves as a second home and shelter for vulnerable teenagers from the streets.
- The youth who come to the centre are at risk due to gang and street violence, crime, substance abuse and HIV infection.
- Since the centre’s set-up in 2009, a total of 678 teens registered at the centre, and there are currently 340 active students who frequent the centre.
- An average of 40 to 50 students visit the centre at any time during the centre’s operating hours from 7am to 7pm.

**An Imperfect Reward System**

Yayasan Chow Kit faces problems in using special activities and programmes to motivate existing youth and keep more at-risk children off the streets.
There is a need for students’ motivation to be harnessed, but the ambiguous allocation of rewards negates this.

The students’ holistic development needs to be a consideration of the outcomes of the reward system.

Identified Question

How might we review the reward system such that it provides deserving opportunities to both stateless and Malaysian students?

Key Insights
Additional variables were identified for the selection of deserving recipients. (e.g. talent development, academic performance)

An analysis of potential activities/programmes identified the various desired outcomes and variables that may be part of the staff’s selection process.

To replace the first-come-first-served system, an equitable opt-in system for privileges was proposed.

“The presented solution was practical and doable. The team took note of our organisation’s limitations and tried to work around it.” - Yayasan Chow Kit
Expansion & Sustainability

To reach out to more beneficiaries, greater focus on sustainability is required. More support systems are needed for the existing beneficiaries.

Tech Outreach

Malaysia aspires to transform, enhance, cultivate and harness the elements necessary to champion the self-sustainability pursuit in disadvantaged communities. It believes in helping communities tap into their potential and transform themselves through entrepreneurial proactivity, risk-taking and innovation. By adopting the Grameen Microcredit Financing Model by Professor Muhammad Yunus, TECH Outreach aims to fulfill its vision of transforming needy communities.

- There are 2 factors ensuring the success of these women entrepreneurs: Business Coaching and Entrepreneurship Training
- There is a default of 12.5% amongst the Malaysian WINs under TECH Outreach’s micro credit financing scheme. Hence, a repayment of 87.5% is expected.
How might we empower the women to help each other and in the process help TECH Outreach earn revenue to cover its operating costs?

Beneficiaries need more than a loan. They need the skills and knowledge to fully maximise the potential of the loan.

Family is important to the women. The women are reluctant to attend training if there is no one to take care of their children.

Women empowered by TECH did not incorporate the lessons they learnt into their businesses (i.e. accounting).

**Identified Question**
**Tech Family**

TECH Family is created as a support system for these entrepreneurs to share their business expertise and explore opportunities and collaborations with TECH’s beneficiaries.

**Tech School**

TECH School can be run by TECH Outreach in collaboration with partners to teach business and personal skills.

- Dual Structured Payment System: Classes are open to the public and this will subsidise fees paid by the WINs.

Provide childcare facilities while mothers are learning in TECH Outreach School.

“The team had presented 2 solutions, one of which we are looking at to adopt. We look forward to working with your impressive group again, should the opportunity arise.”

– TECH Outreach
Developing a transport community

A series of infrastructure issues results in a longer time for commuters. What can people do to stay productive while commuting?

#BetterCities is an initiative that focuses on creative, collaborative and community-centered approaches to improve urban living and environments in Southeast Asian cities. The fundamental methodologies of their urban engagement are critical discourse, creative intervention, and participatory action to empower and encourage individuals to take more ownership of the places and spaces they belong in.

- #betterKL began with guerrilla public interventions, like #whilewewait with “experiments for bored commuters” where bus stops were modified to encourage dialogue about public transport.
- #BetterCities also proposed ReCAR, car-share model to encourage use of public transit into Kuala Lumpur and highlighted the city’s passionate urban cyclists.
How might we
(1) Increase Commuters’ productivity &
(2) Foster Companionship While Commuting?

Historical policy on car ownership has affected citizens’ commute choices.

Public’s lack of faith in the government’s urban planning

Commuters feel alone, thus the need for social connections is high during long journeys.
Designing for Social Change

Bus route maps displayed within buses, so as to feature and promote KL's landmarks

Song lyrics featured on the interior of buses — sparking casual conversation

A social network for commuters to connect and form a community of volunteers

Book pooling project to promote reading and raise commuters' productivity
FROM THE SEAGULLS - CLASS OF 2015

“"I learnt how to suspend judgement – the value of spending time to understand the context better so we can identify the right problem to solve. It was also interesting how people default to the same few generic solutions regardless of the problems we’re trying to solve (e.g. ask the government, campaign on social media, educate the people). Previously, I was trained to adopt a process of convergence/isolation when faced with a problem. SEAGULL has equipped me with a different tool to tackle complex social issues."

– Choo Shi Jun, Singapore - SMU

“To be honest, SEAGULL Immersion 2 changed me completely. This is, hands down, the best thing that ever happened to me as a leader. I learnt how deeply important empathy is in tackling social change. I understand that leaders get better the closer they are to the people they are trying to help.”

– Arizza Nocum, Manila – University of Philippines
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