

SOCIAL  
INNOVATION  
IN HEALTH  
INITIATIVE

NT 2021

# NEWSLETTER

We welcome a new implementing partner in India this year! New crowdsourcing calls to identify social innovations in health and activities to strengthen capacity for research were also led by our partners in Africa, Asia, and Latin America & the Caribbean.

## RESEARCH TO STRENGTHEN SOCIAL INNOVATION: SIHI RELEASES M&E FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION, LAUNCHES SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT IN THE JOURNAL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES OF POVERTY



In time for the 2021 World Creativity and Innovation Week in April, the [Social Innovation in Health Initiative](#) (SIHI) released the Social Innovation Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Framework that offers guidance for innovators in the healthcare sector. The M&E framework was developed by a working group convened by [TDR](#), the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases.

**“WHAT IF social innovation could be embedded in research and research embedded in social innovation to make solutions inclusive, effective, affordable and sustainable? We hope that this framework will help realize this vision,” TDR Director Dr John Reeder said about the framework.**

An [open webinar](#) on 5 May was led by Dr Joseph Tucker (below) to launch the M&E framework, along with the research checklist, and their applications in actual social innovations. Visit the M&E interactive website: <https://bit.ly/3tedrPc>



Earlier in March, the SIHI network presented 16 pieces that it has published in the Infectious Diseases of Poverty Journal from 2019 to 2021. Prof Lenore Manderson, Dr Uche Amazigo, and Dr Phyllis Dako-Gyeke served as the guest editors of the thematic series on social innovation in health and SIHI titled, “*Social Innovation to Transform Health Care Delivery*.” Read the full collection here: <https://www.biomedcentral.com/collections/SIHI>

## RWANDA AND NIGERIA LAUNCH SIHI HUBS



On 20 November 2020, [SIHI Rwanda](#) (above) announced its official launch as a SIHI country research hub at the College of Medicine and Health Sciences of the University of Rwanda, where it also launched its national open call for social innovations. This took place after COVID-19 restrictions were lifted and meetings were allowed.

After launching the SIHI Rwanda Hub, under the auspices of University of Rwanda, the hub is in the process of documenting key health innovations including the Community Based Health Insurance Scheme (CBHIs), commonly known as *mutuelles de sante*, and other innovations in the health sector that have had a positive impact on the members of the community. The inventory is intended to also highlight the importance of storytelling among the key players in owning such innovations at the academic, community and policy levels. To this end, the SIHI Rwanda Hub members are working in close collaboration with the University of Rwanda and the University of Malawi's SIHI hub. Key members of the academia and students as well as the Ministry of Health have expressed interest in the process of documenting the identified social health innovations.

Another new SIHI hub in Africa, [SIHI Nigeria](#) was officially launched on 25 March 2021. In attendance were the Vice-Chancellor of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, represented by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University, Prof Joseph Ikechebelu, and the Anambra State Honourable Commissioner for Health, Dr Vincent Okpala, and about 120 university staff and students.

Prof Uche Amazigo, retired director of the World Health Organization for Oncocherciasis control, introduced SIHI in her keynote speech and highlighted the numerous innovation opportunities that abound in developing countries. An unveiling of social innovations from SIHI Nigeria's pilot crowdsourcing call also took place, where two innovators presented their social innovations.

## DERBI LAUNCHES NATIONAL CALL WITH 'ROADSHOW'

On 25 February 2021, the [DERBI Foundation](#) launched its first nationwide call for solutions in India dubbed as *"SIHI India Healthcare Excellence Award: A Recognition of Social Innovation and Health Impact Creators."* The DERBI Foundation, based at the Dayananda Sagar University in Bangalore, India, is the newest implementing partner to join the SIHI Network after its participation in last year's SIHI Partners Workshop.

To promote its innovation call, DERBI organised two "roadshow" events in March 2021: *"Introducing Social innovation in Health and the SIHI Network: The SIHI Journey"* with Dr. Noel Juban and Dr. Meredith del Pilar-Labarda (pictured below), co-leads of the SIHI Secretariat; and *"Social innovation in Health Initiative: Introduction, Research and Impact"* with SESH Co-Founder Dr Joseph Tucker. The innovation call closed on 20 April and the top solutions will be announced in June after a review process with a panel of experts from corporations, innovation experts, and NGO partners.

### Examples of Identified social innovations

**Noora Health**

Challenges the status quo of health delivery by transforming family members into equipped caregivers through engaging practical training at hospital premises

- Implementer: Noora Health
- Operations: India
- Organizational structure: NGO

**Challenge:** In resource-constrained settings, relapse and complications following discharge from hospital is common.

**Solution:** Noora Health trains patients and their families with high-impact health skills to improve outcomes and save lives. They rely on nurse educators, ensuring continuity through a 'train-the-trainer' approach.

Dr. Meredith del Pilar-Labarda

## SIHI GHANA LAUNCHES 1ST NATIONAL CALL

[SIHI Ghana](#) opened its [first nationwide call for social innovations in health](#) on 1 December 2020. Despite meeting challenges in the timeline because of the country's general elections and the COVID-19 pandemic, 12 submissions were received and were subjected to in-house and external review processes in March 2021.

To prepare for the innovation call, the SIHI Ghana team held an online capacity building session in September last year with SESH Co-Founder and Advisory Committee Chair Dr Joseph Tucker who shared his expertise and useful materials on crowdsourcing. The team saw the nationwide call as a groundbreaking learning experience that documented social interventions in Ghana and a step towards achieving its vision of integrating social innovations into healthcare delivery. Thus, they added that this would increase universal health coverage and help achieve Sustainable Development Goals.



## SIHI GHANA VISITS SELECTED SOCIAL INNOVATIONS FROM ITS UNIVERSITY CALL

**S** IHI Ghana held site visits to two of its selected social innovations from its open call for the University of Ghana community in mid-2020. The first social innovation trains community health officers of the Community-Based Health Planning and Services programme in carrying out visual inspection of the cervix with acetic acid (VIA) and cervicography, with the goal of improving access to cervical cancer screening in primary care settings. The second social innovation aims to improve adherence to tuberculosis medication by sending daily SMS reminders to patients and using VDOT, or video taking the medicine.

The SIHI Ghana team conducted in-depth interviews with the implementing research teams and beneficiaries of both innovations. The team also produced short videos explaining the two projects. These allowed the team to gain more insights on the impact of these interventions, explore collaborations with other researchers in Ghana, and share local innovations with the global community.



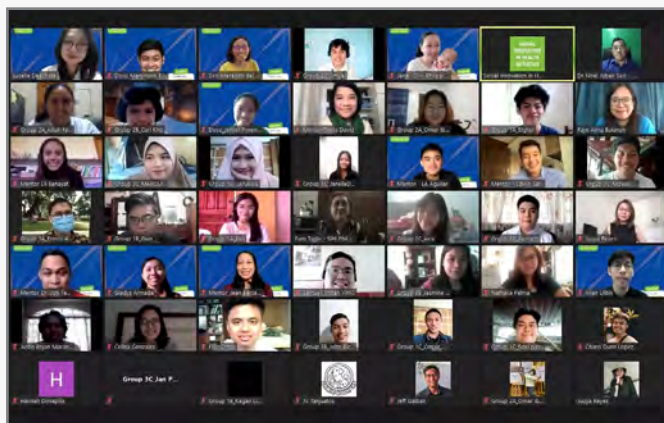
One of SIHI Ghana's identified social innovations trains community nurses in conducting visual inspection of the cervix with acetic acid and cervicography to increase access to cervical cancer screening.

## SIHI PHILIPPINES & SESH HOLD YOUTH OPEN CALL & ONLINE CIVIC HACKATHON

**S** IHI Philippines, in partnership with [SESH](#), Asian Medical Students Association-Philippines and other youth organizations, and with the support of the World Health Organization - Western Pacific Regional Office (WHO-WPRO) launched an open call entitled ["Imagine the World Anew: A Call for Youth Voices on the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Philippines"](#) on 14 October 2020. The call mobilised Filipino youth ages 15-30 to generate and share ideas on how

they imagine the future – life in 2050, how they imagine the key issues in work, travel, and social interaction in a post-COVID-19 world (Category 1), and to share youth-led social innovations related to COVID-19 (Category 2) or other youth-led social innovations implemented during the pandemic (Category 3). The submission period was from 5 November to 18 December.

A total of 113 submissions were received from different parts of the country. After a rigorous evaluation process, 15 were selected as finalists and four were picked as grand winners – two winners for Category 1 and one winner each for Categories 2 and 3. As part of their incentives, the finalists and grand winners joined a one-day online civic hackathon on 30 January 2021 (pictured below). They enjoyed a morning of capacity building plenary sessions and an afternoon of mentoring and “civic hacking,” where they applied their learning, skills, and experiences to co-create health communication campaigns and improve their social innovations. Their outputs revolved around the common theme of promoting Filipino youth's mental health and well-being during the time of the pandemic.



## PHILIPPINES' NATIONAL AWARD SUPPORTS INNOVATIONS IN R&D

**O** n 17 March 2021, the Gelia Castillo Award for Research on Social Innovations in Health (GCARSIH), presented by the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development (PCHRD) and the Department of Health (DOH), in collaboration with SIHI Philippines, [awarded the top three winners](#) and seven finalists out of the 67 submissions from the call held from June to September 2020. [GCARSIH](#) is a national award that aims to recognise social innovations that address persistent, societal, and systemic health challenges in the Philippines, and support these promising innovations for further research and development in order to amplify results. As part of their incentives, the winners and finalists are currently undergoing a series of training and mentoring sessions to help them develop research proposals and move their innovations forward.

## SIHI NIGERIA SELECTS TOP SOCIAL INNOVATIONS FROM ANAMBRA STATE

**A**t a stakeholders' meeting in the Anambra State Ministry of Health on 24 November 2020, [SIHI Nigeria](#) announced the final three innovations from its first open call for innovations. The identified top social innovations in Anambra State were: 1) Drugmedics.com, a digital health solution; 2) Parkers Mobile Clinic, a mobile clinic; and, 3) Ukana West II Community-Based Health Insurance, a community-based health insurance programme. The announcement was attended by the SIHI Nigeria team, the Commissioner for Health and team, and members of the expert review panel. The Anambra State Commissioner of Health expressed hope by saying that innovations "in health and the tech world (that) started like this" attracted angel investors for scale-up.

Earlier, in October, the SIHI Nigeria team made verification calls and visited four shortlisted innovations to personally conduct interviews among innovators, implementers, and beneficiaries. The team found these social innovations insightful, revealing, and engaging.



As part of its case research writing, the SIHI Nigeria team conducted site visits to the shortlisted social innovations in health.

## SIHI UGANDA HUB SELECTS MAKERERE UNIVERSITY'S 2020 TOP HEALTH SOLUTION



**I**n September 2020, the [Uganda Social Innovation Hub](#) ran an open call for solutions from Makerere University, targeting professors, lecturers, research associates, non-academic staff

and students who have implemented innovative solutions that have made health care in Uganda more accessible, affordable, inclusive, and effective. A total of 12 submissions were received, out of which four became eligible for review. The final review identified Social, Emotional and Economic empowerment through Knowledge of Group Support Psychotherapy (SEEK-GSP) project as the university's top health social innovation. SEEK-GSP narrows the treatment gap for depression among people living with HIV (PLHIV) using group support psychotherapy that is delivered by community health workers.

The SIHI Uganda team, led by the hub director Dr. Phyllis Awor, visited the SEEK-GSP project in Kitgum district, Northern Uganda. Interviews were conducted with the innovators, beneficiaries and the health facility managers of Kitgum General Hospital, Pajimo Health Center III and Mucwini Health Center III. Insights about the project are documented in a full case study and a short video prepared by the hub.

## SIHI UGANDA HOLDS 3RD NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS' WORKSHOP



Above: Top social innovations in health in 2020 were awarded in SIHI Uganda's 3rd national stakeholders' workshop.

Below, left: The SIHI Uganda team made a site visit to the SEEK-GSP project in Northern Uganda. SEEK-GSP provides support to people living with HIV.

**O**n 17 March 2021, the Uganda Social Innovation Hub held the third national stakeholders' workshop at Golf Course Hotel in Kampala. The workshop aimed to showcase and award the top community-based health innovations that were identified through two open calls for solutions launched in April and September 2020. It convened officials from the Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MoSTI), and Makerere University as well as innovators, SIHI partners and other stakeholders. Makerere University School of Public Health Dean Prof Rhoda Wanyenze welcomed the participants and lauded SIHI Uganda hub for identifying and advocating for health social innovations in Uganda. SIHI



## SIHI UGANDA... *(continued from page 3)*

Uganda Hub Director Dr Phyllis Awor briefed the participants on SIHI and the hub's activities.

The social innovations that were awarded were the Ishaka Health Plan, My Pregnancy Handbook project, Saving Lives through Community Health Insurance, and the SEEK-GSP (Social, emotional and economic empowerment through knowledge of group support psychotherapy) project. MOH Director of Clinical Services Dr Charles Oloro, MoSTI Director of Science, Research and Innovation Dr Maxwell Otim, and Makerere University College of Health Sciences Principal Prof Damalie Nakanjako led the awarding ceremony.

During the stakeholders' workshop, Dr. Otim and MoSTI Assistant Commissioner for Innovation and Intellectual Property Management Mr Patrick Mugisha expressed interest in tapping into SIHI Uganda's expertise in developing the Uganda National Social Innovation Cluster Programme. In a follow-up meeting with MoSTI officials on 23 March, the SIHI Uganda team agreed to support MoSTI in designing and conducting a national social innovation baseline assessment and a national call for social innovations.

## SESH'S CROWDSOURCING CALL PROMOTES CAREGIVER TRUST IN FLU VACCINATION

The [Social Entrepreneurship to Spur Health](#) (SESH) led a nationwide crowdsourcing open call contest to solicit messages that rebuild caregiver trust in childhood influenza

trust in childhood influenza vaccination in China. Due to COVID-19, the open call was transitioned to a mostly digital format. The open call website was viewed 7151 times according to analytics. The crowdsourcing call received a total of 305 submissions, including 204 texts, 90 images, and 3 videos. All eligible submissions were evaluated by a crowd judge panel and an expert judge panel based on pre-defined criteria (novelty, relevance, feasibility, and elaboration). Crowd judges were invited via social media platforms on a voluntary basis. Experts in public health research, health communication, vaccines, and infectious diseases were invited to the expert panel. Six finalists were selected among the submissions after undergoing a review process.



## UPCOMING/ONGOING EVENTS

**23 MARCH-23 JUNE** **IMAGINE THE WORLD ANEW: A CALL FOR YOUTH VOICES ON COVID-19 IN MALAYSIA** SESH, IMPACT HUB KUALA LUMPUR, WHO WESTERN PACIFIC REGIONAL OFFICE & SIHI PHILIPPINES

**APRIL-JUNE 2021** **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS** SIHI PHILIPPINES & SHE COLLABORATES (MAASTRICHT UNIVERSITY)

**MAY-OCTOBER 2021** **REGIONAL CROWDSOURCING CALL TO IDENTIFY SOCIAL INNOVATIONS IN HEALTH** PAHO IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SIHI LAC AND SIHI HONDURAS HUBS

**JUNE-AUGUST 2021** **STUDENT SOCIAL INNOVATION COURSE** SIHI MALAWI

**20 JUNE 2021** **ANNOUNCEMENT OF TOP SOLUTIONS FROM 2021 OPEN CALL** DERBI FOUNDATION

**22-25 JUNE 2021** **#AHIMSAEVENT21, WITH A SESSION ON LEVERAGING INNOVATIONS TO BUILD RESILIENT SYSTEMS FOR HEALTH** (REGISTER: [HTTPS://BIT.LY/3X2RIVG](https://bit.ly/3X2RIVG)) AHIMSA FUND

## SIHI LAC BOOSTS REGIONAL & INT'L PARTNERSHIPS

In the last months of 2020, the [SIHI LAC Hub](#) strengthened alliances and participated in events that increased its visibility as an organization that identifies and promotes experiences of social innovation in health in Latin America and the Caribbean region.

Among these events were the [3rd International Congress on Social Innovation: Building paths to work in community](#) organised by Universidad Nacional de Colombia and Asociación Colombiana de Universidades on 24-25 November 2020, and the [Institutional Research Congress](#) organised by Universidad El Bosque on 26-29 October 2020. More importantly, SIHI LAC's poster titled "*Social innovation in Health, an Opportunity in Times of Crisis*" won an award in the [1st Ibero-American Virtual Coronavirus and Public Health Conference](#), held by the Escuela Andaluza de Salud Pública in Spain last September. These events were an opportunity to share with other institutions a common commitment to social innovation in health and to the improvement of the quality of life of communities.

SIHI LAC also formed an alliance with TecSalud, a company that supports the development of digital health projects in Latin America and the Caribbean, and with the Universidad de Antioquia, a public institution that has projects on social innovation, implementation research, and community health. Since late last year, SIHI LAC has begun to establish relationships with professionals who have an interest in social innovation in health, implementation research, community health, indigenous health, and related fields through its traditional online space, [the virtual café](#), with the support of the [SIHI Honduras Hub](#). SIHI LAC's new partners come from Costa Rica, Paraguay, Bolivia, Ecuador, Argentina, and Perú.

## SIHI LAC STRENGTHENS TEAM & FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Since the end of 2020, SIHI LAC has worked towards sustainability, focusing on two principal components: the team and the hub's finances. The team expanded to include more diverse and multidisciplinary members. With the support of Minciencias, Laura Sofía Zuluaga, an anthropologist and political scientist with a master's degree in rural development, and Natalia Gómez, who has a master's degree in anthropology, joined the team. SIHI LAC also hired Jennifer Estrella, a social communicator intern, with the support of the Universidad Autónoma de Occidente. These young researchers are integrating social appropriation of knowledge and advancing research in social innovation.

To work towards financial sustainability, SIHI LAC created a sustainability model with Rebecca Thomas, a consultant in global health business strategy. Potential funding sources were identified, and marketing materials were created to best position the hub. The team is set to implement the sustainability model in 2021.



SIHI LAC held a workshop in March 2021 for the co-creation of pedagogical material with rural communities, as part of a participatory research project to develop a community surveillance system for cutaneous leishmaniasis in endemic areas.



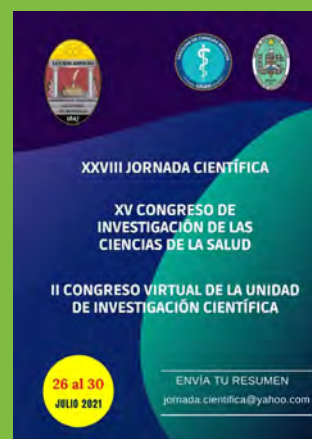
### UPCOMING/ONGOING EVENTS

1 JULY 2021 **DISSEMINATION/LAUNCH EVENT SIHI GHANA**

26-28 JULY 2021 **[PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES IN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH WORKSHOP](#)** (WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE JORNADA CIENTÍFICA) SIHI HONDURAS IN COLLABORATION WITH SIHI LAC

JULY- NOVEMBER 2021 **LEARNING WORKSHOP SERIES SIHI MALAWI** IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NATIONAL COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

TO BE ANNOUNCED **TDR GLOBAL OPEN CALL CONTEST ON MENTORSHIP** TDR & SESH





## MALAWI VP PUSH FOR RESEARCH TO ACCELERATE INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Malawi Vice President Dr Saulos Klaus Chilima presided over the [3rd National Research Dissemination Conference](#) on 18-20 November 2020, where [SIHI Malawi](#) served as a conference core partner. [VP Chilima](#) called for utilising research to accelerate innovation and entrepreneurship towards a productive nation. The conference had the theme, *Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Towards a Productive and Resilient Nation*, and was organised by the [National Commission on Science and Technology and the National Planning Commission](#). In [Principal Macpherson Mallewa's keynote address](#), he presented SIHI as a catalyst for systems innovation, addressing social determinants within innovation, and as a strategy for strengthening the health system.

Also, during the conference, SIHI Malawi and National Commission of Science and Technology jointly conducted an open innovation clinic for early-stage innovators, providing consultations and access to templates and tools, such as innovation databases and intellectual property processes. The objective was to support scale-up and effective implementation of community social innovation as well as bridge the gap between research and impact.

Twelve innovators participated in an interactive small grants mechanism session with multilateral, public/government, and INGO funders as a follow-on activity. They explored the application processes and design beyond grant funding. They were invited to submit proposals on community health, HIV, research, and social change.



## MALAWI & LAC HUBS, KYOTO UNIVERSITY HOLD SHORT COURSE ON SOCIAL INNOVATION



On 10 and 12 February 2021, the Kyoto University School of Public Health and SIHI Technical Advisor Dr Lindi Van Nierek, with participation from SIHI Malawi and SIHI LAC, led a short course on social Innovation in health. The course highlighted the role of social innovation in health and presented practical country examples from Malawi, Colombia, and South Africa to illustrate opportunities in strengthening health systems. The course consisted of two sessions: Social Innovation: Why Now, Why Health, and Social Innovation as Part Health Systems: Malawi Experience. It was attended by both faculty and students, and the SIHI Malawi Hub, the Malawi Ministry of Health, and VillageReach contributed to the course as facilitators and speakers.



PAHO, in collaboration with SIHI Honduras and LAC Hubs, is leading a regional crowdsourcing call that identifies social innovation in health initiatives that improved public health and the delivery of equitable health services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Visit <http://bit.ly/2kLRutQ> for more details.

## AHIMSA'S ARM TACKLES COVID-19

In September 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic gained momentum, the Ahimsa Fund launched the *"Ahimsa Renaissance Movement"* initiative (ARM) as a way to learn from the crisis. Founded in the belief that COVID-19 must be a starting point for change, the movement proposes through Ahimsa's international network to address specific topics towards improving the global health landscape.

ARM's five initial avenues for action are the fight against COVID-19, tuberculosis, elimination of cervical cancer, empowerment of women, and reconciliation of traditional and conventional approaches to medicine in the context of a global "One Health" approach. Every month, about 20 field organizations from different continents, cultures and religions share their experiences, needs, and vision to find new models in addressing these issues. ARM is working on a fellowship programme for 12 young people (pictured on the right) from around the world, including one of SIHI Malawi's project managers, where they will contribute to reflections on the five projects, participate in interactive workshops, and be

mentored on public health, entrepreneurship, and innovation.

Inaugurated in December 2020 by Michael Møller were ARM's series of webinars with young leaders from Malawi, India, and Canada. Moller is the former Undersecretary-General of the United Nations and the 12th Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, today Chair of the *Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator*. On 2 February 2021, the second conference was led by Katherine Marshall where she said that "it is an aspiration held by many that this pandemic will force us into a greater recognition of common interest, but we should never blind ourselves to the realities of the tensions that it exacerbates."



## SIHI MALAWI INNOVATIONS 2019-2020

**Mothers' Fun Run.** A national platform by *Nation Publications Limited* that consolidates efforts from private sector, government, NGOs, communities, and the public to improve maternal and neonatal health (MNH) outcomes. Yearly, through crowdfunding and strategic partnerships, resources are mobilised for quality MNH service delivery in public facilities, medical equipment, and infrastructure. Storytelling and a dedicated newspaper sections are used to raise awareness and advocacy, and drive targeted actions.

**Managed Surgical Network through WhatsApp Group Forum (WFG).** An effective, real-time consultation and support network for surgical care across the southern region of Malawi. It facilitates more responsive case management and referral feedback mechanisms between district health facilities and central hospitals. Through case discussions and feedback from specialists, multiple clinicians and district teams become competent on case management protocols.

**Online Clinic Yathu (OCLIYA).** An online platform using a home-based care approach that provides health services and care for a wide range of non-communicable diseases and general conditions through online and mobile tools. The main functionalities include home-based services appointment booking, a directory of medical and allied health professionals in Malawi, and electronic medical consultations.

